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A
COMMENTARY

ON THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES:

CRITICAL, DOCTRINAL, AND HOMILETICAL.

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MINISTERS AND STUDENTS

BY

JOHN PETER LANGE, D. D.,

ORDINARY PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BONN,

IN CONNECTION WITH A NUMBER OF EMINENT EUROPEAN DIVINES

TRANSLATED, ENLARGED, AND EDITED

BY

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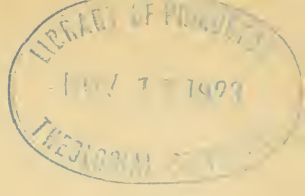
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY. NEW YORK,

IN CONNECTION WITH AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF VARIOUS EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

VOLUME XIV. OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: CONTAINING THE MINOR PROPHETS¹

NEW YORK:
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS,

1899



THE

MINOR PROPHETS.

EXEGETICALLY, THEOLOGICALLY. AND HOMILETICALLY

EXPOUNDED

BY

PAUL KLEINERT, OTTO SCHMOLLER,
GEORGE R. BLISS, TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, **CHARLES ELLICOTT**,
JOHN FORSYTH, J. FREDERICK McCURDY, AND
JOSEPH PACKARD.

EDITED BY

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PREFACE BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE volume on the MINOR PROPHETS is partly in advance of the German original, which has not yet reached the three post-exilian Prophets. The commentaries on the nine earlier Prophets by Professors KLEINERT and SCHMOLLER appeared in separate numbers some time ago¹; but for Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, Dr. Lange has not, to this date, been able to secure a suitable co-laborer.² With his cordial approval I deem it better to complete the volume by original commentaries than indefinitely to postpone the publication. They were prepared by sound and able scholars, in conformity with the plan of the whole work.

The volume accordingly contains the following parts, each one being paged separately:—

1. A GENERAL INTRODUCTION to the PROPHETS, especially the MINOR PROPHETS, by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D., Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago, Illinois. The general introductions of Kleinert and Schmoller are too brief and incomplete for our purpose, and therefore I requested Dr. ELLIOTT to prepare an independent essay on the subject.
2. HOSEA. By Rev. Dr. OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated from the German and enlarged by JAMES FREDERICK MCCURDY, M. A., of Princeton, N. J.
3. JOEL. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. JOHN FORSYTH, D. D., LL. D., Chaplain and Professor of Ethics and Law in the United States Military Academy, West Point, N. Y.
4. AMOS. By OTTO SCHMOLLER. Translated and enlarged by Rev. TALBOT W CHAMBERS, D. D., Pastor of the Collegiate Reformed Dutch Church, New York.
5. OBADIAH. By Rev. PAUL KLEINERT, Professor of Old Testament Theology in the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. GEORGE R. BLISS, D. D., Professor in the University of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.
6. JONAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of the University of Berlin. Translated and enlarged by Rev. CHARLES ELLIOTT, Professor of Biblical Exegesis in Chicago.³
7. MICAH. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. GEORGE R. BLISS, of Lewisburg.
8. NAHUM. By Prof. PAUL KLEINERT, of Berlin, and Prof. CHARLES ELLIOTT, of Chicago.
9. HABAKKUK. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.

¹ *Obadjah, Jonah, Micha, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah. Wissenschaftlich und für den Gebrauch der Kirche ausgelegt von PAUL KLEINERT, Pfarrer zu St. Gertraud und a. Professor an der Universität zu Berlin. Bielefeld u. Leipzig, 1868. — Die Propheten Hosea, Joel und Amos. Theologisch-homiletisch bearbeitet von OTTO SCHMOLLER, Licent. der Theologie, Diaconus in Urach. Bielef. und Leipzig, 1872.*

² The commentary of Rev. W. PRESSL on these three Prophets (*Die nachexilischen Propheten*, Gotha, 1870) was originally prepared for Lange's *Bible-work*, but was rejected by Dr. Lange mainly on account of Pressel's views on the genuineness and integrity of Zechariah. It was, however, independently published, and was made use of, like other commentaries, by the authors of the respective sections in this volume.

³ Dr. Elliott desires to render his acknowledgments to the Rev. Reuben Dederick, of Chicago, and the Rev. Jacob Lotke, of Faribault, Minnesota, for valuable assistance in translating some difficult passages in Kleinert's Commentaries on Jonah, Nahum, and Habakkuk.

10. ZEPHANIAH. By Professors KLEINERT and ELLIOTT.

11. HAGGAI. By JAMES FREDERICK MCCURDY, M. A., Princeton, N. J.

12. ZECHARIAH By Rev. TALBOT W. CHAMBERS, D. D., New York. (See special preface.)

13. MALACHI. By Rev. JOSEPH PACKARD, D. D., Professor of Biblical Literature in the Theological Seminary at Alexandria, Virginia.

The contributors to this volume were directed carefully to consult the entire ancient and modern literature on the Minor Prophets and to enrich it with the latest results of German and Anglo-American scholarship.

The remaining parts of the Old Testament are all under way, and will be published as fast as the nature of the work will permit.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK. 1874.

THE
BOOK OF HOSEA.

EXPOUNDED

BY

OTTO ✓ SCHMOLLER, PH. D.,

URACH, WÜRTENBERG

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, WITH ADDITIONS,

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HOSEA.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. *Person of the Prophet.*¹

THE name **הוֹשֵׁעַ**, which occurs in ver. 2, as well as in the superscription, ver. 1, signifies *deliverance, salvation*. It was a name not uncommon among the Jews. The last monarch of the kingdom of Israel² furnishes another familiar instance. It was also the original name of Joshua, having been changed by Moses to **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ**. The LXX. write the name *᾽Οσηε* (for which Paul, however, in the citation from our Prophet, writes *᾽Οσηε*), the Vulgate *Osee*, and Luther, more conformably to the Hebrew pronunciation, *Hosea*. The Prophet's name = Deliverance, stood thus in marked contrast to the aim of his mission, — the announcement of ruin and destruction. And yet it well agreed with his vocation as a messenger of God, to return to whom would have been the only but the sure way to deliverance. So also the final "deliverance" of God's people was the grand object kept in view through all the terrors of the judgment denounced upon apostate Israel. Thus the position at the beginning of the Book of the Twelve Prophets, occupied by Hosea, was truly significant.

As to the origin of the Prophet we have no direct information. Only the name of his father, Beerī, is mentioned in the superscription. But we may be justified in seeking his home in that region which is clearly presented as the scene of his labors, namely, in the Kingdom of Israel. It is true that we have, in Amos, an instance of a prophet sent from Judah into the Kingdom of Israel, as also in the case of the prophet mentioned in 1 Kings xiii. But if Hosea also had been so commissioned, the fact would probably have been recorded as something unusual, as was done in the case of Amos. Yet prophets were not unknown in the Kingdom of Israel (*e. g.*, Jonah under Jeroboam II., 2 Kings xiv. 25, and, previously, Elisha with the school of young prophets trained by him). But the perfect familiarity with the circumstances and topography of the northern kingdom, displayed by Hosea, furnishes positive evidence that he belonged to that region (comp. chaps. v. 1; vi. 8, 9; xii. 12; xiv. 6 ff.). That, in chap. ii., he calls it directly "the land," and, in chap. vii. 5, terms its king "our king," would seem to prove, further, that he resided there, while his diction betrays an Aramaic coloring, in forms as well as in particular words. His frequent casual references to Judah do not invalidate the evidence of a northern origin. For it was impossible that a prophet of Jehovah, were he ever so much a citizen of the kingdom of Israel, should lose sight of Judah; for Judah was the kingdom of David, and it was to it alone that those promises related, which formed the sure ground of the Messianic hope, that the Lord would not cast off his people utterly and forever, but that a time was coming when they should rise gloriously from out of their desolation. The prophet could call attention all the more impressively to the strictness of the divine righteousness as displayed towards Judah; for even that nation was not to be spared, but was to be punished for its apostasy, how much less, then, should the kingdom of Israel fancy itself secure in its gross unfaithfulness to God! Finally, if the superscription, in the first line of which the period of the

¹ [Compare, besides the articles on *Hosea* in the Bible Dictionaries, an ingenious and suggestive *Life of the Prophet Hosea*, by Prof. Green, of Princeton, in *Our Monthly*, Cincinnati, January and February, 1871. It is constructed mainly from hints scattered through the book itself. Dean Stanley gives an eloquent sketch of the Prophet in his *Lectures on the History of the Jewish Church*, ii. 409 f. — M.]

² [In Engl. Vers. written *Hoshea*, to distinguish him from the Prophet. Comp. *Zachariah* and *Zechariah*, also identical in the Hebrew — M.]

Prophet's ministry is defined according to the succession of Kings of Judah, should be adduced as proof that Hosea did not belong to the Northern Kingdom, it might be shown that this proves nothing, since it is not certain that the superscription proceeded from the Prophet himself. It may have been prefixed to his writings in the kingdom of Judah some time after their composition, and this mode of indicating his era would then have been quite natural.¹

With regard to the circumstances of Hosea's life we know absolutely nothing. What tradition has to say upon this subject is utterly devoid of support and quite worthless.

With regard, however, to the character and disposition of the Prophet and his inner life generally, much could be gathered from his book. But this is to be gained more fully from what is unfolded in the book itself, and we shall therefore postpone our inquiry until we come to examine the subject as presented there.

There can be no doubt as to where the scene of the Prophet's labors lay. It was the more northerly of the two divided kingdoms, the Kingdom of Israel. The prophecies which he has left to us in his book are almost exclusively occupied with that kingdom, the events, religious, moral, and political which had transpired there, and the destiny which was awaiting it. Judah is, indeed, not unfrequently mentioned, partly in contrast to Israel (Ephraim), partly as being guilty of the same transgressions. In the latter relation it is named with greatest frequency in chaps. v. and vi., but afterwards only in isolated passages: viii. 14; x. 11; xii. 1. But Judah is always referred to incidentally, and in such a way that no doubt is left upon the mind, that the Prophet, though giving to Judah a prominent place, did not regard it as the sphere of his mission. The supposition that later, at least, he betook himself to the kingdom of Judah and there composed his book (Ewald), cannot be established.

If we seek for the period in which the Prophet lived and labored, we meet at once with a definite statement in the superscription (ver. 1), which defines this period as "the time of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and Jeroboam, son of Joash, king of Israel." This would assign to the active ministry of the Prophet a very long duration. "For between the death of Uzziah and the first year of Hezekiah there intervened thirty-two years. But the Israelitish king, Jeroboam II. died, at the least calculation, a considerable period before Uzziah. The interval was probably twenty-six years, although the discordant statements of the books of the Kings with regard to the relation of the Kings of Judah and Israel prevent us from assigning with certainty the precise period. Thus, according to the superscription, the ministry of Hosea must have begun long before Uzziah's death, and if we place it only a short time before the death of Jeroboam II., it must, since it reached to the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, have been of very long duration, about sixty years." (According to the ordinary reckoning Jeroboam died B. C. 783, and Hezekiah ascended the throne in 727.) This result is calculated to excite doubts of the correctness of the superscription. We therefore seek grounds of support in the book itself. It appears to be quite certain from it that Hosea appeared before the fall of the dynasty of Jehu, which affords us the *terminus a quo*. For it is with the announcement of the destruction of this house that his book opens. "But it was only," remarks Ewald rightly, "the idolatry promoted by the house of Jehu, that was denounced; the people were still, to all appearance, great and powerful." More especially, there is as yet no allusion whatever to internal commotions, or to the subversion of the order of things in the state. We can hardly refer his first appearance to the period succeeding the death of Jeroboam II., during which the kingdom was probably in a state of anarchy for from eleven to twelve years. And if the supposition of such an interregnum should be pronounced untenable, we have still less room for Hosea's appearance after Jeroboam's death; for with his son Zachariah the house of Jehu lost the throne, thus bringing about the event threatened by the Prophet, Zachariah having retained possession only half a year. The dynasty of Jehu then actually appeared to be firmly established, but was undoubtedly being undermined internally even in the time of Jeroboam. To this period, therefore, concerning which we have a brief notice in 2 Kings xiv. 23-29, and which is there expressly spoken of as a time in which Jehovah gave help through Jeroboam, for "He had not yet declared that He would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven," to this period towards its conclusion, we can assign, with almost perfect confidence, the *terminus a quo* of Hosea's ministry. It is a matter of greater difficulty to fix the *termi-*

¹ [For the further discussion of this question, and the reasons for doubting the correctness of the conclusion arrived at above, see the superscription as expounded in its place. — M]

nus ad quem. We are certain, at the outset, only of this much, that Hosea labored and wrote before the sixth year of the reign of Hezekiah; for it was in that year that the event transpired which he had so plainly announced, the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel, by the Assyrians. But how closely are we justified in approaching this limit? That Hosea lived during the gloomy period of the disorders occasioned by the usurpations under Zachariah, Shallum, and Menahem, described briefly in 2 Kings xv. 8–20, is a well established fact, for these events are most vividly mirrored in his discourses (see especially chap. vii.). But the Assyrians stand in the foreground with special prominence, as the power in which help was sought, and to which “gifts” were sent in time of distress, — foolishly, for it was in these actions that the Prophet discerned so clearly the sure way to destruction through Assyria. We must therefore descend at least to the reign of Menahem; for it was then that Assyria under Pul, first came in contact with Israel, Menahem paying him tribute, and thus purchasing from Assyria assistance in his efforts to maintain his kingdom.¹

Ewald does not feel himself at liberty to seek any later period, and therefore does not go down as far as the reign of Pekah, thus excluding the period of King Uzziah in Judah. For it was under Pekah that Tiglath-Pileser, summoned by Ahaz to assist him against Pekah, who had formed an alliance with Rezin, king of Syria (2 Kings xvi. 5–9), wrested from the kingdom of Israel the northern and eastern portions of the country, more particularly Galilee and Gilead (2 Kings xv. 29). Yet of these important transactions the Prophet appears to know nothing historically, Gilead and Tabor, in his view, comprising between them the whole of the kingdom, and Gilead, so often mentioned, appearing throughout as an unconquered territory. But these grounds are not unassailable. In the first place we do not even know to what extent the conquest was carried. It may have been only a plundering expedition. It is certain that these districts stood only in the relation of tributaries to Assyria. But, especially, we do not know how long this state of subjection lasted. May we not be allowed to assume, in the absence of other information, that the later expedition of Shalmaneser against Hoshea (2 Kings xvii. 3) was occasioned by the circumstance that Hoshea had regained possession of the territory formerly subdued by Tiglath-Pileser? In that case, however, we must take into consideration the interval between the utterance of the discourses and the composition of the book. “In them, therefore, allusions might well be found to events and circumstances which at the time when the book was composed, belonged to the past” (Hengstenberg). Thus for example, Hosea might have survived the first Assyrian invasion under Tiglath-pileser, even though, in his discourses, Gilead appears to be still a component part of the kingdom, which in other passages, *e. g.*, chap. xii. 12 (11), it is not necessary to assume. For a tributary relation to Assyria and utter destruction are things entirely different. Scarcely anything then stands in the way of the attempt to bring the *terminus ad quem* down to the days of Pekah and Hoshea. On the other hand, there are many things which seem to demand such an attempt. The whole position which Assyria assumes with Hosea seems to show that what he spoke and wrote did not fall on the first contact with Assyria under Menahem, which had a comparatively favorable issue, but that Assyria had already displayed her power, so fraught with danger to Israel and causing such destruction, as was done by Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah. And many indications seem to point directly to the reign of the last king Hoshea; one instance is the denunciation of the double relation, into which Israel entered simultaneously with Assyria and Egypt (chap. vii. 11; xii. 2). Ewald would refer this to two political parties. But nothing is known of any connection with Egypt under Menahem at least; and even though chap. vii. 11 could be interpreted in this interest, the expression employed in xii. 1 indicates so clearly an alliance and an offering of gifts, that we are only justified in supposing that transaction to be referred to, of which we have certain information, namely, the double game which, according to 2 Kings xvii. 3, 4, Hoshea played with Assyria and Egypt. We may obtain still clearer testimony to the correctness of this view, if, in

¹ [This was the first occasion recorded in the Scriptures, and also, probably, the turning-point in the history of Israel's relations with Assyria, which terminated so disastrously to the former. If we may trust, however, the translation of the inscription upon the black obelisk brought by Layard from Nimrūd, which was erected by Shalmaneser I. we are pointed to the reign of Jehu as the period of the first contact. It is stated there that Benhadad II. and Hazael (enemies of Israel) were among the conquered foes of the great Assyrian, and that Yahua (Jehu), the son of Khumri (Omri, who must therefore have been considered the founder of the Kingdom of Samaria) paid tribute to him. In this translation all authorities concur. Sir Henry Rawlinson infers also from 2 Kings xv. 19, that Menahem “had neglected to apply for the usual confirmation of his kingdom,” and that this was the cause of Pul's invasion. He draws a like inference with regard to Amaziah of Judah from 2 Kings xiv. 5. If these opinions are correct, it would appear that the countries were brought into frequent contact before the first occasion alluded to in the Old Testament. — M.]

chap. x. 14 Shalman be understood directly to stand for Shalmaneser so that the first expedition of Shalmaneser, mentioned in 2 Kings xvii. 3, would be referred to as having already been made, and as a new invasion is here threatened, the last expedition of that king which brought ruin upon the kingdom would be regarded as impending. But the passage is obscure, and the conclusion which must be adopted is that the *terminus ad quem* can be only approximately ascertained. But, at all events, no direct testimony can be adduced against the correctness of the designation of time made in the superscription, which extends the ministry of the Prophet to the reign of Hezekiah.

Accordingly Hosea was, most probably, an older contemporary of Isaiah, whose ministry began in the long reign of King Uzziah in Judah, though much later than that of Hosea, and extended to a period much later. He would also be contemporary with Micah, if he actually lived until the beginning of Uzziah's reign. On the other side he comes in contact with Amos; for the latter prophet lived in the contemporary reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam II.; and if it was the case that Hosea did not appear until after the death of Amos, he must have been closely connected with him, not merely in time, but also in their common vocation. For it was the mission of Amos also, though belonging to the tribe of Judah, to proclaim the divine judgments upon the kingdom of Israel. Hosea, therefore, takes up the thread where Amos had let it drop and keeps spinning it out until the destruction of the kingdom. He also manifestly makes reference to Amos, comp. Hos. viii. 14 with Amos ii. 5 (i. 4-7, 10, 12; ii. 6); Hos. ix. 3 with Am. vii. 17; Hos. xii. 8 with Am. viii. 5; Hos. xii. 10 f. with Am. ii. 10 ff. While Amos is probably cognizant of the power, Assyria, by which God was to execute his judgments upon the kingdom of Israel, but does not name or even allude to it, in Hosea it is named plainly and very frequently, and he must denounce any association of Israel with this World-Power, which had approached already so near. Hosea falls, in any case, in the last of the three periods of the history of this kingdom. The times in which he lived, as defined above, form a twofold period, or two periods, outwardly at least, very diverse. One was the period of the vigorous rule of Jeroboam II. who raised the kingdom to an unprecedented position of eminence and power, although internal conditions of decay were abundantly present, which the Prophet was commissioned to prove. The other was the period of the visible decline and decay of the kingdom after the fall of the house of Jehu and under the succeeding kings, induced inwardly by a religious and moral ruin, and not deferred, but only hastened, by an untheocratic policy, which sought support among foreign powers, and delivered the nation into the hands of the Assyrians. The information given in the historical books concerning this whole period must have its due place in the study of the Prophet. Comp. 2 Kings xiv. 23-29; xv. 8-31; xvii. 1-6, and, as supplementary to it, the pragmatistical treatment of the subject, assigning the causes of the destruction of the kingdom, 2 Kings xvii. 7-23. The truest picture of the whole period is presented by the Prophet himself in his whole book, to the examination of which we accordingly pass.

§ 2. *The Book of the Prophet.*

We have in the Canon under the name of Hosea one book in fourteen chapters.

With regard to its *contents*. We have seen above that it is mainly occupied with the more northerly of the two kingdoms, although the kingdom of Judah is not therefore kept out of sight, being alluded to repeatedly, especially in chaps. v. and vi., in conjunction with Israel. What then has it to say with reference to that kingdom? A single glance into our book is sufficient to inform us. It is chiefly occupied with a most severe testimony against the national apostasy from Jehovah, and the deep and prevailing moral and civil corruption which appears throughout as the fruit of that apostasy, and in immediate connection therewith, an announcement of divine judgments, which increases in severity until the utter destruction of the kingdom itself is foretold. But this does not exhaust the purport of the book; for, like the other prophetic writings, it contains too an abundant storehouse of promise. By the side of the severe threatenings, though these occupy by far the larger space in the book, there are found words of promise most richly unfolded, not merely as a hope of future conversion and thus of the return of better days, but as a definite announcement that the time was coming when the people, purified by chastisement and returning in grief and penitence to their God, should again find acceptance with Him, and that thereby their kingdom should be restored, not in its then abnormal and divided condition, but as one united body, under a King of the line of David.

But this view only presents the meaning of the book externally, and exhibits only the germs of that which it was the special province of the prophetic writings chiefly to unfold.

It is just with our Prophet that this exhibition cannot satisfy. He presents these general truths in a form peculiar to himself; he would at least, beside the one, the threatening place the other, the promise, but he labors to regard from a single point of view the position which Jehovah bears to Israel and so specially to the kingdom of the ten tribes, and from this to explain both the threatening and the promise; to view them, namely, in the light of *Jehovah's love to Israel as his people*.

In this love of God (and not simply in his righteousness) are rooted, according to Hosea, even the threatening and announcement of punishment, with which he is chiefly occupied. For it was because Jehovah's love embraced his people from the beginning that He could not suffer any apostasy from him, but must become angry at it, must chastise it, must even slay and destroy it utterly, that is, in its corporate existence. All threatening and chastisement is really the indignation and zeal of love,¹ born of sorrow and therefore all the more intense. Hence the announcement of punishment sounds forth in tones of terrific severity. But they also have their end in themselves. Love is indeed angry and most deeply so, but it is and remains nothing but love, for it is pained that it must be angry, and with all its wrath it can only aim to remove that which interrupts and prevents the display of itself to the object beloved, and must ever aim to secure salvation, reconciliation, and restoration, else it would itself stand in the way of realizing its object, and would thus contribute most surely to its own failure. From this stand-point, promise is seen to be as necessary as threatening, and in proportion to the severity of the latter must be the richness of the former, as flowing from the love of God, and not simply from a certain compassion coexisting with his punitive righteousness, or from his faithfulness, by which the covenant is maintained, as though his truthfulness alone were to be kept unimpeachable. If, therefore, we do not wish to rest content with a superficial view of the book, we must regard its meaning from this stand-point as expressed in the following estimate: "The prophetic exhibition of the love of God, wounded sorely and in numberless ways by Israel's guilt, and therefore necessarily a chastening love, though ever remaining unchanged in its inner nature, which being so deeply grounded would not destroy, but heal and recall to itself." Such are the words of Ewald, who has so correctly perceived and so beautifully expressed the fundamental thought of our book, but who views it too subjectively, too much as the mere outflow of the author's own personal feelings, instead of something flowing from a deep insight into the nature of God himself. Yet he makes these admirable observations: "To this prophet the love of Jehovah is the deepest ground of his relation to Israel; that love was always active in forming the Church; it was injured and disturbed by Israel; it chastens now in deep pain, but can never deny itself or be extinguished; it would still deliver and will at length save all. All this is exhibited with the most glowing sympathy, and in a great variety of ways. But no image is here more expressive than that of marriage. As the wife is united to her husband by indissoluble and sacred bonds, and the faithful husband justly feels angry at the unfaithful wife, punishes her or even casts her off for a time, but never can really cease to love her, so has the ancient Church, the mother of the churches now living, borne children, during her unfaithfulness to Jehovah, who resist Him unworthily, and yet the love of Jehovah never departs from them, although he is angry and punishes them."

This last sentence may indicate also why we regard this relation of love between Jehovah and Israel not merely as the doctrinal background of the contents of our book, but an expression of those contents themselves. For Hosea, from the very opening, presents expressly this relation of Jehovah and Israel under this figure of the husband, who just because he is united to his wife by the bond of love, must as surely be indignant with her and punish her, as he must also be unable to let her go, but must hold out to her the prospect of a cordial reinstatement in her former relations.

The figure becomes indeed less prominent as the book advances, but appears through the whole sometimes more obscurely, sometimes more clearly, and even emerges again into the foreground in several passages. The conception of Israel's conduct is based upon this image, partly as it is designated infidelity, whoredom, which applies not merely to idolatry itself, but sets forth the principle that underlies the false, untheocratic policy of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes in its alliances with the world-powers; and partly and still more as everything that is said of Jehovah's conduct towards Israel, of warning, of threatening, of pun-

¹ [Comp. Delitzsch, *Comm. on Job*, Introduction. — M.]

shing, of promising, is rooted wholly in this fundamental idea of Jehovah's love to Israel as his spouse drawn from the analogy of wedded love, — except that this image of wedded love is interchanged with the figure of paternal love, equally strong in another direction, as especially in chap. xi. in accordance with the fact that the subject of that chapter is Jehovah's conduct towards Israel in his childhood. This latter relation is thus placed parallel to a relation of personal love based upon a moral course of life. This view explains why our book, in a way so peculiar to itself, refers so much to Israel's earlier history. For it is natural that love should remind the one beloved, who had become unfaithful and refused to reciprocate affection, of the beginning of their attachment; that the husband should recall to the wife, when such a rupture of the marriage tie has taken place, the first love with which he met the bride (as the father also reminds the backsliding son of the love displayed toward him in childhood). On the other hand when the course of infidelity is complete, he is led to remember the beginnings and foretokens of such behavior in earlier days, and he explains the present in the light of the past, justifies his anger and chastening in the present and his bitter complaints over the unfaithfulness of his wife, by adducing the complaints made and the punishments which had to be inflicted in former times. If the recollection of the past thus intensifies the bitterness of injured love, it is equally potent, on the other side, in preventing the extinction of love; for to the wounded and deeply injured one it again presents the attachment in its whole extent, and forces the thought upon him irresistibly and imperceptibly: "This is the one upon whom thou hast bestowed thy love, with whom thou hast been and art united in love, and whom, therefore, thou canst not let go from thee utterly and forever."

If we now consider the contents of the particular divisions of the book, we find this much to be clear at the outset; first, that chaps. i. and ii., and next that chaps. iv.—xiv. are closely connected. With regard to the first and smaller division, chaps. i. and ii., the fact is more incontestable than with regard to the second and longer one, which, in any case demands itself a subordinate division. The question is now, how we are to reckon chap. iii. It has been attached by some to chaps. iv.—xiv. as their introduction. But the correct view will be found to be given in the words of Hävernick, that "the symbolical method of representation unites the first three chapters into one whole." And if we are reminded of the somewhat abrupt introduction of chap. iii., we must observe that an explanation of the symbol is given in vers. 4, 5, — an explanation in plain words, in fact the first one which occurs, of the discourse in chap. ii., which from ver. 4 onwards is figurative throughout, representing Israel as an adulterous wife, so that we here arrive at a conclusion which clearly expresses the sense of what precedes.

It will more clearly appear that the view which regards chap. iii. as belonging with chaps. i. and ii. is the correct one, if we remember that the contents of chap. i. (and therefore also of chap. ii.) certainly fall in an earlier period than the discourse in chaps. iv.—xiv. (as chaps. i.—ii. relate expressly to the "beginning of the word of Jehovah to Hosea"), namely, in the period preceding the fall of the house of Jehu (chap. i. 4), while chaps. iv.—xiv. belong to the second period defined above, after its fall; for it is in that portion that Assyria first appears, which is decisive. If now the symbolical narrative in chap. i. must have appeared earlier than chaps. iv.—xiv., it is only proper to suppose that chap. iii., so analogous to it, falls in the same period, that we have here generally fragments drawn from the earlier part of the Prophet's ministry, and that therefore chaps. i.—iii. form a connected whole. It is thus natural to assume that the symbolical mode of presentation, in general, characterizes the earlier period of the Prophet's labors.

We thus assume two main divisions: chaps. i.—iii. and chaps. iv.—xiv., and in favor of such partition have not only internal grounds but also an external argument, namely, that each part is the product of a distinct period. The one of earlier origin is, however, comparatively small, and the opinion is plausible that the Prophet, in committing the whole to writing, prefixed the former part as a kind of introduction to the greater prophetic discourse which constituted the main division, like a vestibule inviting an entrance. The contents, also, are appropriate to this purpose with their symbolical actions and figurative discourses. It has something enigmatical, surprising, straining the attention, and so preparing the way for reaching and hearing what is expressed in a simple, literal form.

The first introductory portion (chaps. i.—iii.) which contains "the beginning" of the divine revelation to Hosea, describes the (spiritual) adultery of the kingdom of the ten tribes in its apostasy from Jehovah to idolatry, and the conduct of Jehovah towards this unfaithful spouse.

The most severe punishment even to rejection is threatened against it, but, as the end and aim of such punishment, new and higher blessedness is held out in prospect.

This is set forth in three sections, each of which contains both threatening and promise, with the aim of showing clearly how little these are to be separated, how, rather, both have a common source in the love which Jehovah has to Israel, since He stands united with it in (spiritual) marriage.

1. Chap. i. 2—ii. 3. The Prophet must symbolically, by a marriage with a wife of whoredom, hold up to Israel its sin, and, by the names of the children born of this marriage, announce its rejection (i. 2-9). Yet its future acceptance and reunion are immediately pictured with a few outlines (ii. 1-3).

2. In copious, extraordinarily vivid, and, especially in the latter portion, most sublime language, Jehovah unbosoms Himself to his unfaithful spouse, Israel. He utters a severe accusation against her, and proclaims that she shall be punished by falling into a condition of extreme want, that she shall be laid waste (vers. 4-15). But with this new "leading into the desert" a change occurs; Jehovah concludes a new alliance, rich in blessing, with the spouse returning in penitence to Him (vers. 16-25).

3. Chap. iii. The Prophet must again show symbolically by his conduct towards the wife of whoredom, whom he was commanded to marry, that God still loves his adulterous wife, Israel, and would only in his love humble her, that she might return to Him.

The second division, the main portion of the book (chaps. iv.-xiv), the product of a later period, as we saw above, is in form distinguished from the earlier part by the entire absence of symbolical acts, the discourse being literal throughout. The purport is, however, similar in its essential features, inasmuch as here also punishment and even destruction (on account of its apostasy) are announced to the kingdom of Israel. But at the same time also it is predicted that it shall be received back on the ground of its expected conversion; indeed a time of richest blessing is at last held out to it in prospect. Jehovah appears here also as one who loves Israel, and must therefore punish it for infidelity, though as unable to give it up, and as being forced to be again merciful and to bless according to the law of love. The object is accordingly essentially the same; this inability to give up Israel, this ultimate favor and blessing form here also the picture of the future. But it costs labor, as it were, to realize this aim; the threatening is so severe. This constitutes by far the largest portion of the whole, and only after it has disclosed its full severity, does promise break through, when Jehovah seems as it were to call to mind his former love for his people, thus showing that from the beginning love did not fail, but that even his accusings and threatenings arose from deeply wounded love. This suggests already that the ground upon which the prophecy proceeds, is changed. Idolatry, as unfaithfulness to Jehovah is, it is true, always the fundamental offense on account of which judgment is declared, but to this is added not only moral pollution, but also dissolution of the state, and especially the pursuance of a false policy altogether opposed to the character of a people of God, which sought help in external aid against the distresses which invaded them, partly in Assyria and partly in Egypt. It is the unfaithfulness of Ephraim towards Jehovah, mainly in this form of a political attitude entirely untheocratical, against which the prophet appears, and on account of which he announces judgment, the punishment threatened being destruction by those very world-powers, Egypt, and especially Assyria.

This second main division, of such large extent, calls itself for a division. But this is a matter of great difficulty. It is, however, certain that the attempt to assign the several chapters to different periods of time, and thus to view the succession of the chapters as determined by the order of their composition (Maurer and Hitzig among others), must be unsuccessful, even if it be conceded that these chapters did proceed originally from different occasions. It is remarkable, for example, that in chaps. iv., v., vi., Judah is mentioned frequently along with Ephraim, while afterwards it retreats more into the background, so that it is natural to infer different situations as their occasions. But as the whole lies before us at present, there is a certain unity apparent, though it is difficult to follow definitely the course of thought. We must abandon the supposition of a strictly logical arrangement of the parts in view of the nature of the language, marked, as it is, by excitement and constantly surprising abruptness. Different expositors adopt most widely differing divisions, while others abandon the attempt altogether.

It is clear, at the outset, that from chap. iv. onwards accusation of Israel occupies the chief place, as describing its degradation and guilt; and Ewald has rightly perceived that

chap. iv. is to be separated as containing a general charge, relating to the apostasy generally of the people from Jehovah, and the moral deterioration thereby induced. Then in chap. v. the denunciation is more specially directed against those of exalted position (comp. vers 1), and as its subject, in addition to the general unfaithfulness to Jehovah, something special enters, namely the false, untheocratic policy of "going after Egypt and after Assyria." This is, at all events, the new element here, and in attempting to exhibit the progress of thought, this point must so far be made prominent. In chap. vi. this does not appear, but the chapter is so closely connected with chap. v., that no partition is supposable. On the other hand the denunciation of the untheocratic policy becomes still more marked in chap. vii., being there directed chiefly against the court itself, while chaps. v. and vi. seem to be aimed more particularly at the priests. Hence chap. vii. also is to be combined with these chapters. So in all these chapters the threat of punishment is uniformly united with the accusations. But actual *announcement of judgment* appears first in chap. viii., accusations however being still uttered. Compare the beginning, chap. viii. 1, and it seems to show more especially that the punishment, namely, the transportation into Egypt and Assyria, and therefore, the destruction of the state, the carrying away into captivity, is presented as the reverse side of the calling upon Egypt and going to Assyria. For the same reason chaps. ix. and x. are to be added with chap. viii. Chap. x. 15 forms a fitting close to this section. But the contrast to the transportation to Egypt and Assyria appears again only in chap. xi. 11, so that we stand first upon new ground in that passage.

Thus with chap. xi. begins a new section, and with it enters *promise*. Jehovah's love to Israel, which seemed to be utterly swallowed up in the announcement of judgment, here breaks forth. At first, indeed, only in the form of a reminder of its manifestations in early times, how it was vouchsafed to Israel in childhood. This is naturally expressed in a sorrowful complaint against that Israel, who now in his manhood requites that love so ill, displaying in his apostasy the basest ingratitude. Hence we have again in chap. xi. 5, the most severe threatening. But Jehovah has again brought his love to remembrance; it is He that loves Israel, as had been already shown in the beginning; this love is his essential disposition towards Israel, and thus cannot in the present belie itself; it oversteps wrath and appears as mercy, and promise breaks forth on its shining way, like the sun after dark and long distressing clouds. The brief recollections of former times in chaps. ix. and x. only served to give point to the keen accusings. But in chap. xi. the sun breaks forth brightly. It is promise that now prevails.

But the storm is not yet past. In chaps. xii. and xiii. denunciation and announcement of punishment reappear. Yet, if they are still severe, they are much less protracted. But, chiefly, there seems to be a new standpoint gained. It is the past that is dwelt upon, namely, what had transpired between Jehovah and Israel in former days. But this is a great step gained. Hence the weighty words are twice uttered: "I am Jehovah, thy God, from the land of Egypt" (chaps. xii. 10; xiii. 4). This thought does, it is true, serve to sharpen the complaint, and with it to sharpen the threatening; but that people cannot be given up who have, from the beginning, Jehovah as their God. Hence in chap. xiv. 2-4, the exhortation to return, which shows clearly his determination not to give them up; and now, upon the ground of their expected conversion, love at last flows forth in the fullest promise, which is no longer merely a cessation of punishment, as in chap. xi. 9 ff., but, positively, holds out in prospect a glorious state of blessedness.

The course of thought is accordingly not perfectly undeviating, but, especially towards the close after the highest point has been reached, rather deflected, as it tends towards the conclusion through the wrestling of love and justice, which it thus expresses. Ewald assumes after chap. xi., a sort of preliminary conclusion, marking an interruption in writing. It is, at all events, correct to assume that the train of thought has then reached a certain completion, after which the former order of the discourse is again taken up.

The following scheme will exhibit our attempt to divide the section:—

Jehovah pleads with Israel, his beloved but unfaithful spouse (comp. chap. iv. 1).

I. First discourse (chaps. iv.-xi.).

1. Chaps. iv.-vii. The complaint, addressed—

a. (Chap. iv.) against the people as a whole, on account of their idolatry and deep depravation of morals promoted by the priests.

b. (Chaps. v.-vii.): against the rulers (priests, chaps. v.-vi.), court (chap. vii.), especially on account of their ungodly and calamitous alliance with the powers of the world.

2. Chaps. viii.-x. The judgment, extending even to the carrying away of the people to bondage under Assyria.

3. Chap. xi. Mercy; God cannot utterly destroy Israel, whom He has always loved, but will again have compassion upon them even though they have most vilely requited his love.

II. Second discourse (chaps. xii.-xiv.).

1. Chap. xii. Complaint is once more resumed, and —

2. Chap. xiii., judgment is most emphatically declared; but —

3. Chap. xiv., in hope of conversion, love finally flows forth in the promise of richest blessing.

[Those who may wish to become acquainted with the various methods of dividing the book which have been proposed, will find them exhibited and discussed in the *Biblical Repertory*, Jan. 1859, art. "Book of Hosea," by Prof. Green, of Princeton. A division having much to recommend it is that adopted by him from Keil, according to which each of the two main sections (chaps. i.-iii., iv.-xiv.) is divisible into three smaller ones (i. 2-ii. 1, ii. 2-23, iii.; iv. 1-vi. 3, vi. 4-xi. 11, xi. 12-xiv. 9). Each of these smaller sections in both of the main divisions is marked by its beginning with denunciation and ending with promise. — M.]

In harmony with the fundamental thought of our book, as above presented, according to which it describes the sorrow and indignation of Jehovah's love, so sorely wounded by Israel's infidelity, the *language* is of a peculiarly emotional and impassioned character, reflecting unmistakably the rush and swell of the feelings. "This anguish of love at the faithlessness of Israel so completely fills the mind of the Prophet, that his rich and lively imagination seeks perpetually by variety of imagery and fresh turns of thought, to open the eyes of the sinful nation to the abyss of destruction beside which it is standing. His profound sympathy gives to his language the character of excitement, so that for the most part he merely hints briefly at the thoughts instead of studiously elaborating them, passes with abrupt changes from one figure or simile to another, and moves forward in short sentences and oracular utterances, rather than in gently rounded discourse." (Keil.) Jerome (*Præf. in XII. Proph. Min.*) says of him: "*Commaticus* (literally, cut up = short) *est et quasi per sententias loquens.*" Eichhorn (Introduction, § 555, p. 286) says not unaptly: "The style of the Prophet is like a garland woven of various kinds of flowers, comparisons intertwined with comparisons. He breaks off one flower and throws it away, only to break off another immediately. He flies like a bee from one bed of flowers to another, bringing the honey of his varied sentences." With these features are connected manifold anomalies in the structure of his clauses, rugged transitions, ellipses, asyndetical constructions, inversions, and anacolutha. Add to this that his diction is marked by rare words and forms and unusual combinations, and it may be conceived how difficult is the exposition of the book. "One must often read between the lines if he would establish the connection between the several thoughts and sentences. We will not be charged with overstatement, if we assert that the Prophet is in this respect one of the most difficult of the prophets of the Old Covenant, and indeed of all the Biblical writers." (Wünsche.)

The abruptness of the language, reaching often to obscurity, does not merit any censure, for this peculiarity is to be explained from the contents and the subject of which the Prophet was full. "His heart," remarks Wünsche, "full of the deepest anguish, on account of the destruction and the inevitably approaching dissolution of the State, makes him neglect all artistic and harmonious treatment and exhibition of his theme." And Ewald says with perfect correctness: "In Hosea there is a rich and lively imagination, a pregnant fullness of language, and, in spite of many strong figures, great tenderness and warmth of expression. His poetry is throughout purely original, replete with vigor of thought and purity of presentation. Yet at one time we find the gentle and flowing predominate in his style, while at another it is violently strained and abrupt, and his irresistible pain causes him often to give a hint of his meaning without allowing him to complete it. There is also thrown over the whole language the burden of the times and of the heart so oppressed by them."

If, finally, we inquire into the *composition* of our book, we find no ground whatever for maintaining that the author was any other than the Prophet himself, or for the assumption that, although the several discourses came from Hosea, they were yet first compiled by another and later editor. It has been thought that their aphoristic character justifies such a hypothesis, but we are convinced that this is not so marked as one would certainly suppose at first sight, and that the several portions are not only governed by one fundamental idea, which would probably have become still more obscured in the hands of a later redactor of such fragments, but that the several parts are brought into a definite order and connection.

There can therefore be scarcely a doubt that our book came from the hands of the Prophet precisely in that form in which we possess it to-day. "On closer examination the book is seen to form a complete whole executed according to a fixed artistic plan, and with corresponding beauty. This artistic plan and execution only need to be rightly understood in order to show us that it was finally published as a whole, and in its present form, by the Prophet himself." (Ewald.) But as to the relation in which this book stands to the numerous prophetic utterances of Hosea, we are compelled to assume that we have not in this book those discourses presented in their original form. If this had been the intention of the Prophet, we should have had a greater number. Moreover the book is framed too decidedly according to a certain plan, making it clear that it was designed to form a continuous and regular composition. We have therefore to regard it as a selection from his discourses, or more correctly, as a free and independent working-up of the substance of them by the Prophet himself. His several utterances are combined by him into one complete picture. He would employ not only his lips but also his pen, and by his writings would testify concerning the holy anger of the love of God, and thus appeal to the consciences of the people.

But here the question may be asked, whether our book is the first product of Hosea's pen, whether, more particularly, earlier writings are not embodied in it. At the outset it is certainly to be assumed that Hosea was in the habit of writing down his several discourses. But keeping this in view, the difference between the first part of the book (chaps. i.-iii.) and the second (chaps. iv. ff.) is so significant, the contents of the first part, moreover, falling in an earlier period, that Ewald's conjecture has much to support it: that chaps. i.-iii. contain the substance of an earlier composition of Hosea, which he embodied in the present one when he executed it. Even if we hesitate to go so far as this, we must probably assume that the separate sections of chaps. i.-iii. had been published already by the Prophet, since we have in the narratives of the symbolical actions merely the drapery in which they were to be presented to the world and not actual occurrences (see below). For in those chapters punishments were announced which were inflicted at a time earlier than the completion of the whole book. The Prophet could incorporate into his book only at a later period earlier actual events; but these symbolical transactions existed only in the mind of the prophet, and in publishing them he must have come forth at a time when these parabolic narratives could address themselves to the conscience of the people, and therefore a considerable period before the composition of the whole book, which, as we now have it, contains, in its second part, discourses of a much later time. Such publication of the symbolical transactions might indeed have been at first only oral; but the contents of these sections seem less appropriate to that mode of announcement.

The preservation of the whole book in the destruction of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes may be readily explained. "Through the intercourse which was kept up between the prophets of the Lord in the two kingdoms, it was carried soon after its composition into Judah, and became widely diffused in the circle of the prophets, and was thus preserved, as Jeremiah especially has made frequent use of it in his predictions. Comp. Aug. Küper, *Jeremias, Librorum SS. Interpres atque Vindex*. Berlin, 1837, p. 67 ff." (Keil.)

After what has been said it will scarcely be necessary to add anything special in the way of exhibiting the importance of our prophetic book in Old Testament history and doctrine. Into the internal relations of the kingdom of the ten tribes, against which he, like his older cotemporary, Amos, directs his words of rebuke and threatening (by which these two prophets mark a new step in prophecy, in distinction from Joel and Obadiah, regarding the heathen not merely as the objects but also as the instruments of the divine judgment, which is inflicted with the greatest severity against the people of God themselves),—into the internal relations of this kingdom Hosea gives us the deepest insight, and affords a most essential addition to the knowledge which we have thereon from his older cotemporary. As to its doctrinal teaching, however, there can be no doubt as to the significance of a book, which regards the relation of Jehovah to Israel so profoundly and specially from the standpoint of holy love, of a holy wrath of love, and looks so far into the depths, into the intensity as well as into the sincerity, of such love as, in the examination of the contents and fundamental thought of the prophecy, we have shown that it does. In this he stands above his nearest predecessor, Amos. That prophet also discerns the favor of God shining again at last upon his people after the tempests of his wrath. But he grounds it upon the consciousness that this judgment is and shall be only one of trial and not of destruction, and

that room is thus prepared for mercy through the revelation of wrath, while Hosea traces back this duality in the divine revelation to the nature of God Himself, by his more profound conception of the divine love.

Our book is therefore truly a classic for the right understanding of the Old Testament conception of God with its interaction of love and wrath, and of the nature of the Old Testament revelation concerning God. Only such a God who can so be angry and so love, who in all His love so displays anger and in all His anger so displays love, could give up his Only-begotten Son to the accursed death for the deliverance of rebellious man.

§ 3. *The Symbolical Transactions in Chaps. I. and III.*

What is recounted in these chapters is so peculiar, and has always been regarded under such different views, that a more intimate discussion cannot here be foreborne: and to it we shall therefore devote a separate section in the Introduction. In this the results of the exegesis of the passages in question are of course to be anticipated, and must therefore be referred to here. This much is however certain that, according to the narrative, mention is made of a marriage of the Prophet with an unchaste woman at the command of God himself. Here we have a stone of stumbling. It is true that the ground of moral offense contained herein does not exist according to some interpreters, inasmuch as the "wife of whoredom" whom the Prophet is to marry, is regarded as being such in the spiritual sense in which a "whoring" of Israel is spoken of = serving idols; that Hosea had scruples about marrying a whorish, that is, an idolatrous woman; and that it is commanded him not to stand aloof from her but to exhibit symbolically in his own domestic fortunes, that is, by his union with such a woman, Jehovah's relation to his people. But this view is quite untenable. For idolatry cannot be a symbol of idolatry, a marriage with an idolatress cannot be a symbol of a like marriage, namely, the marriage of Jehovah with an idolatrous people. This, altogether apart from the consideration that such a command of God to the prophet is not conceivable, that such marriage would have produced upon the people an effect exactly opposite to the one intended, namely, the presentation of idolatry to the consciousness as something sinful, if we can suppose that any effect was produced. Umbreit also seeks to establish more firmly the interpretation of the woman's whoredom as spiritual whoredom, by maintaining that Hosea, in order to represent God's marriage with Israel, was commanded to enter into marriage with Israel; but, since all Israel had become adulterous towards God, that he was obliged in order to enter the marriage relation with Israel, to unite himself to a whore in the spiritual sense = idolatress. Such a wife thus represents, as an individual, the whole people. And this outward marriage of the Prophet is the symbol of his spiritual marriage with his people. But Kurtz remarks rightly against this hypothesis, that the notion that the Prophet himself was to enter into a spiritual marriage with Israel is quite unfounded, that such a conception is not once found in the Old Testament, which knows only of a marriage of Jehovah with Israel; that the Prophet by his external marriage could symbolize only that spiritual marriage of Jehovah, and not his own spiritual marriage with Israel. For this reason his marriage, in order to represent the marriage of Jehovah with adulterous Israel, must be a marriage with a whorish woman in the outward sense.

Thus it is beyond question that it is such a marriage of the prophet that is here described, but the question is now: Must we assume an actual outward event in the life of the Prophet or not?

It is clear that we have before us a transaction which has a symbolical significance and is therefore in so far a symbolical transaction; but the question is just this, Is this an actual event intended as a symbol of a higher truth, or do we move outside the sphere of objective reality? The latter supposition does certainly seem, on the first view, to be excluded by the language employed, which does not give us the slightest hint that we have presented to us anything else than outward reality, but rather creates the impression that it is a record of actual events. And it is not to be maintained that the narrative has to do with something physically impossible, that it bears directly upon itself the stamp of unreality in the external sense. But it appears all the more probable that something morally impossible is described; for would it not be in the highest degree incredible that a prophet should marry an unchaste woman, and that at the express command of God? Hence the literal interpretation has been rejected already by the Chaldee Paraphrase and by the Jewish Commentators. But this plea is itself not altogether without difficulties. The reference to Lev. **xxi.**

7-14, at all events, proves nothing: for what is there forbidden to a priest cannot be directly transferred to a prophet (comp. Kurtz: "That prohibition is based upon the consideration that the priests were to represent the ideal holiness of the people, and is rooted in the same ground as is the law that a priest must be free from physical blemishes. The latter injunction is as far as possible from implying that physical defect is sin in an Israelite, and the same holds with regard to the former"). And then it is one thing to have intercourse with an unchaste woman, in order to practice fornication with her, and quite another to marry such a woman. The one is as assuredly sinful as the other is in itself not so, any more than it was for Jesus to be a friend of publicans and sinners. For the prophet would not have entered into such an alliance that he might be assimilated to the woman, but in order to raise her up to his own level, to rescue her from her sinful habits: "*Non propheta perdidit pudicitiam fornicariæ copulatus, sed fornicaria assumsit pudicitiam, quam antea non habebat*" (Jerome).

Such an alliance in the Prophet would have been in the very highest degree surprising. But it may be asked, Was it not intended to be so, in order that the people, in their astonishment at such an anomaly, should ask what it meant, and might then learn to their shame, that it held up to them a mirror in which they could perceive their own relations with God? The Prophet would reinforce his oral preaching by a preaching of outward action; this marriage would have been a lasting actual proclamation of punishment to the people, not impeding the influence of the Prophet, but furthering it.

But on a closer examination of this view, which understands actual events to be described, most serious objections to it are immediately suggested. A beautiful picture could have been drawn exhibiting the morally reforming influence of this alliance upon the light-minded wife and the neglected children of the first marriage, and how worthy of God it would have been, answering to his compassionate love seeking that which was lost! But of this there is not a syllable—not a syllable *could* be said. Rather, this idea, which alone could neutralize the moral objections against this alliance with an unchaste woman, is completely excluded by the whole spirit and aim of the command which the Prophet received. It is just the present "whorish" conduct of Israel, the still existing and continued and persistent infidelity towards Jehovah, that is represented by this marriage of the Prophet, and punishment and rejection are then exhibited as the necessary fruit and consequence of such conduct. Thus the "wife of whoredom," whom the Prophet is to and does marry, is necessarily to be regarded as one who does not amend her ways, or is withdrawn from her life of sin by her alliance with the Prophet, but who even now in this alliance with him is conceived as practicing unchastity, who shows and proves herself to be unfaithful to her husband. Otherwise she would not be at all an image of Israel as thus situated, nor would this marriage be at all an image of the present conduct of Israel towards their husband, Jehovah. Strictly speaking, this wife of whoredom would have been bound, so long at least as her marriage with the Prophet was to testify to Israel of its sin, not to forsake her sinful life (until special corrective measures, related in chap. iii. should be taken with her, so that she might become a testimony of that which God, still retaining his love for Israel, would do to them).

There is no need to prove that the assumption of an actual occurrence would lead to an ethical monstrosity. With the design of this marriage to exhibit the conduct of Israel towards Jehovah, is most clearly connected a circumstance, which shows more plainly than ever the non-reality of the related transaction, namely, that the Prophet is expressly enjoined to take a wife of whoredom and *children of whoredom*. This is at first sight surprising, but becomes quite intelligible if we think of the design, of that which was to be exemplified, the conduct of Israel and all its individual members. Israel in the concrete is represented only by the latter; but this separation of a part from the whole is very frequently found in relation to Israel. Israel as the whole then appears as the mother, the individual members as the children (comp. chap. ii. 4 ff.). Now both Israel as a whole and all the members of the people are unfaithful to Jehovah, they "commit whoredom." If therefore the actual condition of affairs in its whole extent is to be represented by a marriage of the Prophet, he must take to wife a woman still practicing unchastity, and, at the same time have children, who are children of whoredom, that is, naturally (see also below in the exegesis) not those who were the fruit of the illicit commerce of the mother (a woman characterized as a woman of whoredom could, in fact, have no other, and the remark would be quite superfluous), but children who stand in the same relation to whoredom as the mother does, that is, who practice whoredom as she did, and bear therefore a faithful resemblance to

her. How then is the Prophet to "take" these children of whoredom? Naturally the notion of such "taking," which in the case of a woman means marrying, must be modified in the case of children. Two senses are supposable. One is that he obtains them by marriage as children already born to his wife. In that case he is obliged to find out an unchaste woman, who has children that already commit whoredom; and not only so, but they must actually continue that habit; for otherwise the symbol no longer meets the conditions of the case, the sign no longer agrees with the thing signified. In short, under the assumption of an objective reality in this transaction, we come again to an ethical monstrosity. But the case is still worse, if we understand "taking" the children in the sense of begetting them with the wife (and this view is the more probable one; see the exegesis below). For Jehovah is married to Israel, and they are unfaithful to Him; and Jehovah has begotten children by this marriage — the individual members of the people — and they also are unfaithful to Him, they "commit whoredom." So the Prophet, in order to manifest this, must not only take a wife of the above description, but also beget children by her who are of the same character as she, are unchaste like her. It might be known antecedently that they would be so; they are, so to speak, predestined to such a character; if it were otherwise, they would fail to perform their part, they would not represent what it was intended they should. To speak of actual reality in such a case is now a sheer impossibility. The thing signified, that which is to be represented, is revealed too clearly through the sign, that which is to set forth the relation; only one thing could make it plainer, namely, that the Prophet should add: of course this was not really done! — but one must be almost blind to suppose, even for a moment, that it could be. The symbol is arranged simply in accordance with the thing to be symbolized, without reference to the consideration that in concrete reality it would encounter invincible obstacles: naturally such reference does not need to be had, because the transaction was not realized *in concreto* and *in facto*, but was only a plastic symbolizing of a certain condition of affairs which was to be denounced.

We must now go a step backwards. That which morally excites such objections lies not merely in the fact of this marriage with an unchaste woman, of whom again unchaste children were to be born, but also in its *design*. It is to be observed that the alliance spoken of has its aim purely out of itself, terminates in nowise upon itself, but is merely a mean to an end. This end is not the begetting of children. They are certainly to be begotten, but they are themselves only means to an end, with their significant names, which they receive in order to announce to the people their rejection. This marriage was thus to be contracted purely for the purpose of symbolizing another fact which lay altogether without the sphere of marriage. Such a conclusion cannot be disputed unless there is imported into the words something foreign to them. Let the words be followed closely, let not separate expressions: he went and took, etc., be emphasized, but the whole be accepted and understood as it reads, with no interlarding of all sorts of notions, about the use and plausibility of this alliance, of which nothing is indicated, and the narrative will be seen to relate to a marriage and procreation of children which are purely symbolical and described solely as serving the purposes of an emblematic representation. And that this transaction, considered as an occurrence of outward reality, is something inconceivable, opposed to the spirit and significance of marriage, is so clear, that the Prophet did not need to give the least hint of its unliteral character (if, indeed, that had been the custom of the Prophets). No; an actual marriage is not concluded simply in order to symbolize something different; the marriage is a symbol of a higher covenant. But its design is not realized in such symbolizing. That would be a trifling with the idea of marriage, agreeing but little with the profound conception of that state, which the Prophet brings to light in this very act of conceiving the relation between Jehovah and Israel as a marriage. I can give a name to a child born of a marriage, for the purpose of indicating something by it symbolically; but it would be something quite different if I were to enter into the married state simply for this purpose. And hence the reference to Is. vii. 14; viii. 3, 4, where, however, an outward act is narrated, is altogether unsuitable. If recourse is had to the words of the text, it may be replied that many prophetic passages, *e. g.*, Jer. xxv. 15 ff., Zech. xi., show clearly that the simple words of the narrative are not decisive. In such passages the words, taken literally, even when relating to symbolical transactions, seem to record an occurrence entirely objective, though no one supposes that they really do so. In other passages this inference is more patent, while here it is obscured, though only apparently so; for that which it is ethically inadmissible to sup-

pose should be done by the command of God, is just as incredible as the occurrence of that which is physically impossible.

We have now to consider, finally, in what a brief period the action is performed, the rapidity with which the several acts are, and are intended to be, presented. It is the rapidity which, if the word may be allowed, is well suited to a dramatic conception, but not to concrete reality. By literalists the fact is entirely ignored that this symbolical course of teaching would have required three years at least for its complete unfolding. And in connection with the other considerations the remark of Simson (in spite of the strictures of Kurtz) is perfectly just: "After each of the four principal scenes which make up the symbolical narrative (vers. 2, 4, 6, 9), the explanation and occasion of the symbol follows, connected with 'for' in such a peculiar way, that it may be gathered indubitably, simply from this connection and the whole manner of expression, that the figure is not presented in its actuality, but is only devised for the sake of making evident to the senses the lessons it unfolds." Thus the view which regards the actions described as real occurrences is seen to be untenable if we do not even go beyond the first section; nor do we need to add to the other arguments the relation of chap. iii. to our section. On the contrary, we think that arguments have been too much drawn from that portion of the book, and therefore too largely based upon external grounds, and for this reason less convincing than they should be.

Now after this negative result, that the narrative is not to be regarded as relating actual occurrences, the question first arises: What then does it relate? A vision? So the Jewish commentators, and in recent times especially Hengstenberg. This view does indeed surrender the externality of the transaction, but it holds to its actuality, only assuming that it was not experienced outwardly but inwardly. With regard to this hypothesis of a vision, it is admitted that a "beholding" lies at the foundation of all prophetic announcement, that is, a vision in the wider sense (comp. the remarks on Amos, chap. vii.). But we are not justified on this account in assuming at once that the Prophet was in an ecstatic state. There is not the least hint of such a thing given in our passage; for nothing is said of a vision in the narrower sense, and hence we are unwarranted in adopting such an assumption here. He certainly "beheld," as all the prophets did, that which he here relates in *parabolic discourse*. It is thus that the narrative is most properly designated.

But it may be asked: If, according to the above reasoning, it leads to a series of monstrosities to regard the (symbolical) transaction as an actual occurrence, was it allowable for the Prophet even to present it in a parabolic dress? This objection, which it seems to be, is possible only under a misapprehension of the whole aim of the exhibition. The action represented is certainly bold, is surprising, is, we say directly, exorbitant. But it was just intended to be so. It was intended, as we remarked above, to rouse the hearer into uttering the question: What? do I hear aright? What do you say the prophet must do? The thing to be set forth, the thing signified, is something abnormal, contradictory, something which it seems could never occur, that Israel should "commit whoredom, departing from their God"; and not this merely, but also (which, to be sure, is the necessary consequence of the former) that God should reject this His people, His spouse, to whom He had always been faithful, to whom He had been so beneficent. Since this condition of affairs to be represented, the "thing signified," was of such a character, it must be set forth by the description of an occurrence of a like kind, that is, one which is just as abnormal, contradictory, and unprecedented, thus necessarily rousing the attention to consider how a prophet could marry a whore at the bidding of God, and by her beget children, who should receive, also at God's command, names indicative of punishment, from their resemblance to their mother. There is therefore intentionally something monstrous, something ethically impossible, held up to the people as though it had happened, in order that it might be forced upon their consciousness, how utterly abnormal, how monstrous, how opposed to the right order of things, is that which they had done to God, and which He must do to them. That, therefore, which the prophet relates to the people is related to them, *because* it is something monstrous; but being so, it was just as certainly not a statement of actual fact for this very reason. If we were to maintain the opposite, we should mistake the design of the prophet. He would say: As Israel has acted towards God, and as He must treat his people in return: so would I, the prophet, act if I were to marry a whorish woman. As impossible as the latter is, so impossible should the former be; and yet alas it is a reality!

But it may be objected: The prophet's marriage would indeed represent to the people their apostasy from Jehovah, and the names of the prophet's children would bring perpetu-

ally to their consciousness the judgment which they must expect in return ; but if that marriage did not take place, and the children never existed, how could such a design be carried out ? Now, this objection is based simply upon an unwarranted supposition, and the inference drawn therefrom must be false. It is taken for granted that such an *argumentatio ad oculos* by outward action must have been made by the Prophet, that the Prophet intended to do so, judging from the statements of the book, and that therefore we have a narrative of actual occurrences, while it is never said that the prophet had any such intention. The Prophet may just as well have intended to appeal to the people, not by means of outward action, but by a discourse in which certain actions were the drapery of those truths which were to be proclaimed. Whether this discourse was originally oral or not, as other prophetic discourses usually were, or whether it existed from the beginning in a written form, we do not know. If the former supposition is correct, we are not obliged to assume, any more than in other prophetic discourses, that it possessed precisely the same form as that which we now have, since it would have the form appropriate to oral discourse. It is quite wrong, however, to insist that such a mere recital, — heard to-day and forgotten, perhaps, to-morrow, — could have but little influence, and make but little impression, for at least its fixed written form followed with its words speaking perpetually to the conscience. And it has been said already above in § 2, that such a fixed form was probably given to it before the composition of the whole book, as at present constituted, and during the period in which the discourses of the first part were pronounced.

But another argument still is adduced against the supposition of a parabolic recital, which is seen to be so necessary from all that has been said. It is urged that this would derogate from the character of the prophetic word ; that the Prophet speaks expressly and repeatedly of a command of the Lord which he had received ; that, if the whole were only a feigned transaction, the words, "the Lord said," would be degraded into a meaningless, rhetorical phrase, which would be opposed to the divinely objective character of Prophecy. Certainly our whole position would be viewed with distrust, if this drapery of narrative in which the Prophet clothes his message of instruction and rebuke, which he records, and in which he makes mention of an express command of God, were to be regarded by him as only an arbitrary device (rhetorical or as being appropriate to the plan of the book). But what is there to support such an assumption ? In this, as throughout his prophetic ministry, the Prophet rather acted and spoke from a divine impulse. He had beheld *what* he had to say to the people, reproach of their sinfulness and threatening of punishment, and *how* he had to say it, that is, he had received from God in spirit an authorization and an impulse to adopt *this* form of rebuke, to present his divine commission in the form of feigned events. It has been further remarked (*e. g.*, by Kurtz), that we have the words : go, take, etc., and not : go, tell the people that thou hast taken a wife, etc. But this objection is without force. For the expression : "The Lord said to Hosea, go, take to thyself," etc., is itself included already in the parabolical discourse as well as vers. 4, 6, 9 ; and to insist that the Prophet must have given some hint that he was not intending to record an actual occurrence, argues a somewhat crude notion of the obligations of a writer. A parabolic discourse must not bear the appearance of being so ; on the contrary it must present itself as describing actual events (*comp. e. g.*, Judges ix. 8 ; 2 Sam. xii.), though it does not really do so. It bears in itself a *sapienti sat* which shows that it does not, — and thus our narrative is really two fold. In general the fact is evidently always overlooked, that we have before us in these seemingly historical portions, not a statement concerning the Prophet, but the written discourse of the Prophet himself ; that, therefore, behind the words there stands, so to speak, the prophet writing. It is not his duty to record events as an historian ; and the inference is unwarranted, that he must do so because what he says has the form of an historical record. Hence, according to correct conceptions as to what different kinds of composition require, no objection based upon the form of representation can be made to the parabolic view. And the circumstance that the Prophet is spoken of in the third person, cannot be adduced as a proof that he does not here speak and narrate (figuratively), and that a statement is made concerning him. It cannot, at least, by any one who regards the whole book to be the composition of the Prophet and not a mere compilation by another. Moreover, in chap. ii. the Prophet introduces himself as speaking of himself in the first person. And, finally, it proves nothing that the name and origin of the woman are given. Even if the names are not applied appellatively (see in the exegesis), nothing would be more natural than to invent names for the occasion, which would be a device appropriate in a symbolical discourse.

If we now turn to chap. iii. and hold the identity of the woman named there with the one in chap. i., the question is decided of itself. For if the marriage, mentioned in chap. i., of the Prophet with this woman, was not an actual occurrence, it is self evident that his dealings towards her in chap. iii. are not more historical. If he did not in reality marry this woman, then he did not actually perform what, in chap. iii., he is commanded to do, love her. The woman is, in chap. i., only a feigned person, and if the same person is meant in chap. iii. she cannot be a real person. But if we regard the woman of chap. iii. as not identical with that of chap. i., we have, in the fact that the Prophet becomes connected with another woman, disregarding his marriage with the one mentioned in chap. i., we have here, I say, a clear indication, applying to the whole narrative from the beginning, that these descriptions do not relate to actual events in the Prophet's life. For it is plain that the assumption of his separation from the first wife, or of her death in the interval, is only a device to escape from a dilemma. Such circumstances must have been stated, if actual events had been related; but not a syllable is found to this effect, simply because it was assumed that no one would think of real occurrences.

But, leaving the consideration of the circumstances connected with the woman mentioned in chap. i., and regarding simply by itself the command given to the Prophet in chap. iii. according to his own representation of it, we find the matter here to be somewhat different.

The fact is to be set forth that Jehovah preserves his faithfulness to Israel in spite of their unfaithfulness, and therefore does not utterly cast them off, but only adopts, for their good, corrective measures springing from such abiding faithfulness. Thus something is to be exemplified which would not be expected, since rejection would be the more natural course, but nothing which should not be, nothing which could be found fault with or would invite censure. And accordingly the symbol, or that which the Prophet was commanded to do, was not something ethically inadmissible or monstrous, but only something difficult, unusual, because involving great self-denial, namely, that he should remain faithful to an unfaithful wife. And what is declared to have been done by him is in the same way not something inadmissible, but only something unusual; for by a series of corrective measures the unfaithfulness of the wife is to be brought home to her heart, while, at the same time, it was to be shown that she would not be rejected. Now though it might appear as if very little could be urged in disproof of the actual occurrence of the event described (that is, if it be viewed as an isolated account), yet here also grave objections arise upon a closer examination. Even if the woman of chap. iii. is not to be identified with that of chap. i., the former is hardly conceived of as being of another character than the latter. The woman is not one who was previously chaste and afterwards became unchaste, but one whose adultery is only the manifestation of her former disposition, and a continuation of her previous mode of life, and the Prophet would thus be represented as entering into such intimate relations with her — whether he married her or not would not be certain — which again would border closely upon the morally offensive and become for the Prophet an impossibility. Here the canon is again to be applied, that acts, which are of an essentially immoral nature and fall under moral criticism, cannot be regarded upon external grounds as having been actually performed by divine command. Thus a husband might, it is true, be so controlled by the thought of God's faithfulness, as even to remain faithful to an unfaithful wife, that is, from moral and religious considerations, whether suggested by himself or by another. But this is not the case presented here: the narrative speaks not of an act undertaken or a course of conduct discontinued upon any such ground, but simply of a positive command of God, which was not intended to remind the husband of a duty demanded of him, but which was issued with the design of a manifestation of God's attitude towards the people of Israel, a design altogether foreign to the nature of marriage or the injunction of fidelity.

The Prophet is represented as doing what he here does purely for this external purpose; not from the recognition of a duty, and not to call attention to such duty: he does it plainly in order to symbolize something different. This is perfectly agreeable to the parabolic mode of presentation; but as soon as we come to hold the notion of an actual transaction, the moral sense revolts against it as against a trifling with things which belong essentially to the sphere of the moral and religious life, and therefore cannot be employed as means to serve another purpose. Finally, if we had real transactions presented to us and not a symbolical form, it could not be very well supposed that the woman, accepting the gift of the Prophet would be inclined to obey his command. The possibility of the opposite would

rather have to be assumed, which was manifestly not the case. But in the parabolic narrative this happens naturally just as the purposes of instruction require.

On the question treated in this section compare the thorough discussion by John Marek, *Diatribe de Muliere Fornicationum*, Leyden, 1696, reprinted in his *Comment.* in 12 *Proph. Min.*, ed. Pfaff, 1734; and in more recent times especially Hengstenberg, *Christologie*, i. 205 ff., who denies the actual occurrence of the events described, and the minute investigation of Kurtz, *Die Ehe des Propheten Hosea* [The Marriage of the Prophet Hosea], 1859, reprinted from the Dorpat *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, who holds as strongly to the literal interpretation.

[The question so fully discussed above is encumbered with difficulties so great as to seem almost insuperable, and it is probable that it will never be satisfactorily settled. Instances might even be quoted of the same interpreter holding directly opposite opinions within a very short period of time. If the history of interpretation were to be thoroughly surveyed, it might perhaps be found that the majority of distinguished names have been arrayed on the side of the literal view. It may be remarked, however, that among modern interpreters, the more reverent and cautious of those of Germany seem, as a general rule, to favor the theory that the prophet was not to fulfill the commands actually and outwardly. Among the Anglo-American Commentators, on the other hand, the preponderance of opinion still is, as it always has been, in favor of the literal interpretation. So among the recent writers, Pusey and Cowles. The opinion that the Prophet beheld the events in vision has been maintained by Pococke and lately by Fausset. This theory is discussed at length by Cowles in a dissertation appended to his Commentary, to which the reader is referred. It may be remarked, generally, that the main support upon which the defenders of the literal interpretation rely, is the nature of the language employed, bearing, as it does, not the slightest indication that the commands were to be fulfilled in any other than a literal manner, and that the opponents of this theory take their stand chiefly upon the supposed moral impossibility of the literal fulfillment. The conclusion which each reader will arrive at for himself will depend mainly upon the relative force which these considerations may have upon his mind. — M.]

§ 4. Literature.

SINGLE COMMENTARIES: *Hoseas Chaldaica Jonathanis Paraphrasi et R. Saion. Jizchaki R. Abrah. Aben-Esra et R. David Kimchi commentariis illustratus* (Hosea, illustrated by the Chaldee Paraphrase of Jonathan and the Commentaries of R. Solomon Isaaki, R. Abraham Aben-Ezra and R. David Kimchi), edited by Von der Hardt. Helmstadt, 1703, 4to; new edition by J. D. Michaelis, 1775; Rabbi Isaac Abarbenel, *Comm. in Hoseam*, edited by Franc. ab Husen, Leyden, 1687.

Of the age of the Reformation: Capito, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Strassburg, 1528; Brentius, *Comm. in Hoseam Proph.*, 1560 and 1580.

Of the last part of the sixteenth, with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Jac. Matthæus, *Prælectiones in Hoseam*, Basle, 1590; Am. Polanus, *Analysis Libri Hoseæ Proph.* Basle, 1599; Hier. Zanchius, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Neost., 1600; Dav. Pareus, *Hoseas, Pr. Comm. illust.*, Heidelberg, 1605–1609; Mich. Krackewitzius, *Comm. in Hos.*, Frankfort, 1619; Balth. Meisnerus, *Hoseas*, Viteb., 1620; And. Rivetus, *Comm. in Hoseam*, Leyden, 1625; *Exposition of the Prophecy of Hosea*, by Jer. Burroughs, Oxford, 1643–1652, 3 vols.; Henr. Ursinus, *Hos. Comm. literali enucleatus*, Norib., 1677; Pococke, *Commentaries on Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Malachi*, Oxford, 1685; Seb. Schmidius, *Comm. in Pr. Hos.*, Frankfort, 1687; Franc. Yavassor, *Comm. in Hos. Proph.* (In his works, Amsterdam, 1709); *De Prophetie van Hosea outledigt door J. Biermann* [The Prophecy of Hosea expounded by J. Biermann], Utrecht, 1702; Wackius, *Expos. et illust. Hoseæ*, Ratisbon, 1711; *Hoseas Historiæ et Antiquitati redditus ab Herm. von der Hardt*, Helmst., 1712; Dathe, *Dissert. in Aquilæ reliquias interpr. Hoseæ*, 1757; Manger, *Comment. in Hos.*, Campis, 1782; Schröder, *Der Proph. Hosea aus bibl. und weltlichen Historien erläutert*, etc. [The Prophet Hoseaucidated from sacred and profane histories], Dessau, 1782; L. J. Uhland, *Annotat. Hist. Exeg. in Hoseam*, Tübingen, 1785–1797; J. C. Volborth, *Erklärung des Proph. Hosea* [Exposition of the Prophet Hosea], Göttingen, 1787; C. T. Kuinoel, *Hoseæ Oracula Hebr. et Lat. Perp. Annot. illustr.*, 1792; J. Ch. Banpel, *Der Proph. Hosea erklärt* [The Prophet Hosea explained], Dresden, 1793.

Of the present century: E. G. A. Böckel, *Hoseas*, Augsburg, 1807; J. C. Stuck, *Hoseas*

Propheta, Leipzig, 1828; Simson, *Der Proph. Hosea erklärt und übersetzt* [The Prophet Hosea explained and translated], Hamburg and Gotha, 1851; O. C. Krabbe, *Questionum de Hos. Vatic. Spec.* [A View of Questions relating to the Proph. of Hosea] (Hamburg Programme), 1836; A. Wünsche, *Der Proph. Hosea übersetzt und erklärt mit Benutzung der Targumim, der jüdischen Ausleger Raschi, Aben Ezra, und D. Kimchi* [The Prophet Hosea, translated and explained, with a use of the Targum, and of the works of the Jewish Expositors, Raschi, Aben Ezra, and D. Kimchi], Leipzig, 1868. The most complete of recent times. The copious illustrations drawn from the Chaldee Paraphrase, and the three Jewish Commentaries are very valuable. F. A. Löwe, *Biblische Studien, Erstes Heft: Beiträge zum Verständniss des Propheten Hoseas* [Biblical Studies, Part First: Contributions to the Interpretation of the Prophet Hosea].

For the Practical Exposition: L. C. Gräf, *Der Proph. Hoseas in 172 Wochen-Predigten erklärt* [The Prophet Hosea explained in 172 Weekly Sermons], Dresden, 1716; P. Die-drich, *Die Propheten Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, kurz erklärt für heilsbegierige, aufmerksame Bibellesen* [The Prophets Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, briefly explained for earnest and attentive Bible-readers]. Leipzig, 1861.

[The special works in English upon Hosea, besides those of Burroughs and Pococke mentioned in the above list, are: Bishop Horsley, *Hosea, translated from the Hebrew with Notes, Explanatory and Critical*, 2d ed. London, 1804; Rev. Wm. Drake, *Notes on Hosea*, Cambridge (England), 1853. Dr. Pusey's *Commentary upon Hosea* in his *Min. Proph.* (in which he has advanced as far as Micah), on account of his excessive allegorizing and spiritualizing tendencies, is not uniformly of the highest critical or exegetical merit, but is worthy of all praise for the great value of its practical remarks. Bishop Wordsworth, who belongs to the same patristic school, treats of the Minor Prophets in the 6th volume of his *Commentary* (London, 1872). — M.]

HOSEA.

SUPERScription. CHAPTER I. 1.

The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beeri,¹ in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel.

PART FIRST. CHAPTERS I. 2-III. 5.

CHAPTERS I. 2-II. 3.

A. *The Rejection of the Kingdom of Israel, and especially of the House of Jehu, on account of their "Whoredom," is symbolically announced.* — Chap. i. 2-9.

2 The beginning² of the Word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea [In the beginning when Jehovah spoke with Hosea, then Jehovah said to Hosea]: Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms; for the land hath committed great
3 whoredom, *departing* from the Lord [Jehovah]. So he went and took Gomer the
4 daughter of Diblaim; which [and she] conceived, and bare him a son. And the Lord [Jehovah] said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little *while*, and I will
5 avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel. And it will come to pass in that day, that I will
6 break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah [Unpitied];³
7 for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them
8 away [that I should keep on forgiving them]. But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord [Jehovah] their God, and will not save them
9 by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle [war], by horses, nor by horsemen. Now when she had weaned Lo-ruhamah, she conceived, and bare a son [And she weaned Lo-Ruhamah
and conceived and bare a son]. Then said God, call his name Lo-ammi [Not-my-people], for
ye are not my people, and I will not be your God [yours].⁴

B. *And yet Israel will be again accepted by God*

CHAPTER II. 1-3.

Yet [And] the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where⁵ it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, *there* it shall be said

2 unto them, *Ye are* the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head; 3 and they shall come up out of the land: for great is the day of Jezreel. Say to your brethren, Ammi [My-people], and to your sisters, Ruhamah [Compassionated].

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 [Ver. 1. — פִּאֲרִי — explained by Gesenius as meaning, fountain; by Fürst *et al.*: one who explains, comp. Deut. i. 5. If a symbolical meaning is sought, the latter is probably to be preferred; if not, the signification must remain undecided. There seems to be no necessity for holding a symbolical sense. — M.]

2 Ver. 2. — הַחֲלֵת ד'. By the construct state in which the first word stands the following (דָּבָר being not an infinitive but a präterite), becomes a sort of substantive phrase subordinate to הַחֲלֵת. [הַחֲלֵת is thus made equivalent to an adverb of time = when at first (Ewald). The construction would thus be similar to that of the phrase בְּיוֹם דָּבָרִי, Ex. vi. 28; 1 Sam. xxv. 15 *et al.* See Ewald, *Gr.*, § 286, 3. For the view which regards the first clause of the verse as a "kind of superscription," see the exposition and Green, *Heb. Gr.*, § 255, 1, 2. — M.] זָכָה הַיְּקָרָה, according to the familiar Heb. emphatic mode of expression, the זָכָה is here marked as complete.

3 Ver. 6. — רַחֲמָהּ is usually regarded as a participle with חָלָה fallen away. But according to Keil it is rather the 3 fem. præter. (in the pausal form on account of the Athnach, as in ii. 3. 25) = "she finds no sympathy, is not compassionated." [This is a question which must remain undecided, as the word occurs only in pause. Yet the common view is preferable, because (1) the part. is the better form for an appellative, as it approaches more nearly to a noun, and (2) if the verb became an appellative it would probably remain a fixed form, or at least not be subject to such changes as the 3 præter. undergoes in pause. The part. would of course retain the Kamets in any case. — M.]

The difficult words פִּי נָשָׂא וְיָרַחֵם probably give a further explanation of the יָרַחֵם. נָשָׂא = to forgive: I will no longer have compassion on them that I should forgive them (Meier: פִּי is climactic = how much less forgive them). The object: sin, is certainly then to be supplied as also in Gen. xviii. 24. But, according to the context, it is easier to supply this than to translate with Hengstenberg: I will take away from them, namely, what they have, or everything they have. In chap. v. 16, נָשָׂא in the sense of taking may without difficulty be construed absolutely. But here, especially with the dative, an object is expected.

[Pusey, Henderson, Cowles, *et al.* follow E. V. in rendering: But I will utterly take them away. Newcome: But I will surely take them away. Ewald agrees with Meier in the translation given above. Henderson admits that נָשָׂא followed by ל' elsewhere means to forgive, and that it might have the same sense here if it were only preceded by the copulative וְ, but that that נָשָׂא meaning but excludes such repetition. Here it is forgotten that פִּי may mark consecution or result, as it does frequently, comp. Gen. xl. 15; Is. xxix. 16; Ps. viii. 5, with many other passages. But Schmoller as well as Keil, who discern the true connection and meaning of the words, have overlooked the occurrence of the inf. before the future of the same verb. All the other critics give to this combination the force of emphasis or intensity. Is it not better to suppose that repetition is implied, which is the fundamental notion? And if the last clause is explanatory of the preceding, the עוֹד of the one must find its counterpart in the frequentative construction of the other: I will no longer have mercy on them that I should continue to forgive them. Greater fullness of meaning and appropriateness is also seen to mark this part of the verse: God had overlooked their sins often before, but He would not keep on overlooking them forever. — M.]

4 [Ver. 9. — לֹא אֶהְיֶה לָּכֶם: I will not be for you, i. e., not be yours, not belong to you. There is no need of maintaining that "God" is understood, as Henderson, Cowles, and the English expositors generally do. The sense is complete without supposing an ellipsis. Houbigant (followed by Newcome) has gone so far as to transpose the letters of the last two words into אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. But this has no support in the MSS. or Versions, and is besides very improbable, not to mention that it supposes the omission of the latter ה. — M.]

5 CHAP. II. 1. — בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר. We might be inclined to render: in the place of [its being said]; the usage of the expression elsewhere is however too clearly opposed (comp. Lev. iv. 24-33; xiv. 13; Jer. xxii. 12; Ezek. xxi. 35; Neh. iv. 14). But מָקוֹם with the subject following is perhaps = instead of, in Is. xxxiii. 21.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. *Superscription.* It has been shown already in the Introduction (§ 1) that the chronological limits assigned in the title must be admitted to be essentially correct. Difficulties have been suggested to the minds of some from the circumstance that when the duration of Hosea's ministry is given, it is, in the first line, placed in relation to the reigns of Judah, and that a king of Israel is mentioned only in the second line. To argue from this, however, that Hosea belonged to the kingdom of Judah, is inadmissible; for as we saw in the Introduction, all other evidence goes to prove that he was a resident of the Northern Kingdom.

But a further difficulty is felt. Only one king of Israel is named, whom Hosea long survived, and the succession of Judaic kings brings down the life of the prophet far beyond the time of that single monarch, Jeroboam II. Hence it is alleged that the second part of the superscription does not agree with the first.

Keil seeks to solve this difficulty by assuming that the Prophet acknowledged only the legitimate rulers of the kingdom of Judah as the real kings of the people of God; and that he defined the limits of his ministry according to the real succession of that kingdom. He introduces along with the names of those kings, that of the Israelitish monarch, under whom he began his prophetic course, not only to indicate that occasion *mora*

definitely, but chiefly on account of the significant position occupied by Jeroboam in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes. He was the last king through whom God vouchsafed any aid to that state. The succeeding rulers scarcely deserved the title of king.

But this explanation, brought forward in order to defend the originality of the superscription, can scarcely be acquitted of the charge of arbitrariness. (The precedence assigned to the Judaic kings would be better explained on the hypothesis that Hosea, at a later period, took up his residence in Judah and there composed his book.) Ewald, who, to be sure, does not admit in its full extent the correctness of the chronological statements of the superscription, supposes that the allusion to the kings of Judah was added by a later hand (which also inserted *Is. i. 1*), while the remainder is the old original superscription, which, however, he thinks belonged at first only to *chaps. i, ii*.

The question, whether the superscription in its present form is quite original, must be allowed to remain undecided.

[As serving however to defend the genuineness of the superscription, comp. with the view of Keil adduced above, the following full and forcible presentation of the probable design of the prophet in its insertion given by Hengstenberg in his *Christology*: "Hosea mentions, first and completely, the kings of the legitimate family. He then further adds the name of one of the rulers of the Kingdom of Israel, under whom his ministry began, because it was of importance to fix precisely the time of its commencement. Uzziah, the first of the series of the kings of Judah mentioned by him, survived Jeroboam nearly twenty-six years. Now, had the latter not been mentioned along with him, the thought might easily have suggested itself, that it was only in the latter period of Uzziah's reign that the prophet entered upon his office; in which case all that he says about the overthrow of Jeroboam's family, would have appeared to be a *vaticinium post eventum*, inasmuch as it took place very soon after Jeroboam's death. The same applies to what is said by him regarding the total decay of the kingdom which was so flourishing under Jeroboam; for, from the moment of Jeroboam's death, it hastened with rapid strides toward destruction. If, therefore, it was to be seen that future things lie open to God and his servants 'before they spring forth' (*Is. xlii. 9*), it was necessary that the commencement of the Prophet's ministry should be the more accurately determined; and this is effected by the intimation that it took place within the period of the fourteen years during which Uzziah and Jeroboam reigned contemporaneously.¹ That this is the main reason for mentioning Jeroboam's name is seen from the relation of ver. 2 to ver. 1. The remark made in ver. 2, that Hosea received the subsequent revelation at the very beginning of his prophetic ministry, corresponds with the mention of Jeroboam's name in ver. 1. But this is not all. . . . There was a considerable difference between him and the subsequent kings. Cocceius remarks very strikingly: 'The other kings of Israel are not viewed as kings but as robbers.' Jeroboam possessed a *quasi* legitimacy. The house of Jehu to which he belonged, had opposed the extreme of religious apostasy. It was to a certain degree recognized even by the

Prophets. Jeroboam had obtained the throne not by usurpation but by birth. He was the last king by whom the Lord sent deliverance to the Ten Tribes; comp. 2 Kings xiv. 27."

The English commentators hold to the originality of the superscription, with the exception of Noyes, who speaks of it as "doubtful." The arguments which establish it are mainly these: (1.) The very fact of its existence in its present form from the earliest known period. (2.) The analogy of other prophetic books as well as of many other portions of the Old Testament, the genuineness of whose superscriptions has never been successfully impugned either by German critics or their English followers. (3.) The improbability of any other hypothesis. Any "redactor" (Ewald and others) could have had no reason to insert such a peculiar title. Its anomalous character shows it to have been the work of the author himself. Any other would either have made no allusion to the kings of Israel, or would have given a complete list of the contemporary ones. There is a purpose manifest here which a collector would not have conceived, and which it was beyond his province to convey to the world by embodying it in an addition to his author's writings. (4.) The exact correspondence between the character of the superscription, the contents of the book, and the position of the author, as partly shown above, and as might be further proved abundantly.

The superscription therefore is original, and original in its present form. As to the place of its composition there is no improbability in the opinion, mentioned by Schmoller above, that with the rest of the book it was composed in Judah. But this cannot explain, as he supposes, the anomalies of the superscription. It only increases the difficulties. Why was an Israelitish king mentioned at all? This question remains unanswered while the old difficulty of the non-allusion to succeeding kings of Israel remains in all its force. The true solution must therefore be sought not in any local conditions of the Prophet, but in his necessary relations as a Prophet of God to the two kingdoms, as determined by their respective characters, and in his desire to assign definitely the limits of his ministry. — M.]

A. Vers. 2-9. *The Prophet announces symbolically to the Kingdom of Israel that it will be rejected on account of its Whoredom.*

Vers. 2, 3. In the beginning of Jehovah's speaking with Hosea . . . and bare him a son — *וַיְהִי בְרִייתוֹ*, literally, in Hosea, that is, *into* Hosea. The simple translation *in*, as expressive of an inner revelation which he received, is excluded even by the usage of the language (comp. *Zech. i. 9, 14*); as also is the explanation: by Hosea. This "*into*," however, must not be modified into simple "*to him*." This would have been — *וַיְהִי בְרִיתוֹ* evidently expresses here a closer, personal relation into which the speaker enters with another person, while *וַיְהִי בְרִיתוֹ*, "to," merely indicates the direction of the discourse. It therefore betokens an energy of speaking, probably also in connection with a certain continuity; answering best to our "*speaking with*" (comp. besides the passages cited above, also *Num. xii. 6, 8*; *Hab. ii. 1*). The whole clause, *וַיְהִי בְרִיתוֹ*, could be regarded as a kind

¹ [This will show the groundlessness of the opinion of Noyes, that "from the contents of the book it is probable that he did not exercise his office until after the death of

Jeroboam, when the kingdom of Israel was in a state of great distraction and anarchy." — J F M.]

of superscription = The beginning of that which Jehovah spoke with Hosea. The discourse would then begin with **וַיֹּאמֶר**. But it is preferable to attach the whole clause, as a specification of time, to the following **וַיֹּאמֶר**, and to take **וְהָיָה**, which is therefore = in the beginning, as an accumulative of time: In the beginning, when Jehovah spoke. The sense would be: When Jehovah began to speak with Hosea, then, etc. [For the internal structure of the clause, see the first Grammatical Note. — J. F. M.] This means that God has begun his revelation to the Prophet with the command immediately following; in other words, that the prophet must enter upon active duty with the following testimony against the spiritual adultery of the kingdom of Israel: **Go take to thee a wife of whoredom and children of whoredom.** "Wife of whoredom:" **וְנָשִׁים** occurs only in the plural, expressing a plurality of acts. —

וְנָשִׁים, a woman whose element is whoredom, with whom the **זָנָה** is a thing not merely incidental. From this designation, as applied to the woman it is evident that it was just in her marriage with the prophet that she would show herself to be an **אִשָּׁה זָנָה**, and would thereby become an adulteress (though naturally this does not exclude the idea that the Prophet begets children by her). The truth to be represented demands this view of the case. For it is Israel married to Jehovah that commits whoredom.

But who are the **בָּנֵי זָנָה**? "Children" mentioned along with the "wife," naturally make the latter appear to be the mother. But they cannot be called children of whoredom simply for the reason that their mother is an **אִשָּׁה זָנָה**. They can have that designation only because they themselves stand essentially connected with **זְנִינִים**. But in what relation? It is readily suggested: "they are related to it as its results = they are the fruit of the **זְנִינִים**, of the mother, are born of the mother in consequence of her unchastity, are of illegitimate birth." But, according to this explanation, the genitive would have a sense different from that which it has in the former connection, and this creates a difficulty. If a woman, who practices lewdness and is in fact wholly given up to it, is called **אִשָּׁה זָנָה**, it is most natural to assume that the construction exactly similar and immediately following should be understood in like manner to express action and disposition. **בָּנֵי זְנִינִים** therefore = children who act and are disposed like their mother, children of the same character as their mother. And this must be admitted to be the correct explanation when it is remembered what is to be represented by the woman and her children, namely, Israel conceived of as the mother of a people, and its children. And the fact which is to be established with regard to Israel and its children is, that they all practice whoredom; comp. the explanatory clause, **כִּי־זָנָה הָאֶרֶץ**. It is not said that the children are of adulterous origin, but that the whole people — the people as a whole and in their individual members, or, according to the Hebrew personifying mode of conception, the mother and her children, commit lewdness. "Go, take to thee:" **לָקַח** is, according to the

constant Hebrew usage, equivalent to our phrase, "to take a wife," i. e., to take a woman to be a wife, to marry. And **לָקַח** (ver. 3), which expresses the fulfillment of the command given with **לָקַח**, has certainly no other sense. In our verse, another object, still, **בָּנֵי זְנִינִים**, is joined to **לָקַח**. This is done by *zeugma*, in the sense: *Accipe tibi uxorem et suscipe ex ea filios scortationum.* He is, accordingly, to ally himself with an unchaste wife, and the children which he begets with her are to be like their mother. This is just the position of Israel. Israel, Jehovah's spouse, committed lewdness, and the children, who belonged both to Jehovah and to her, acted just as their mother did. Wife and children grieved equally the Husband and Father. The reference here is therefore not to children which the woman is supposed to have had before her marriage with the Prophet. The force of the painful experience of grief over his own children, through which the Prophet was to pass, would then be lost. By these children of whoredom we are not to understand directly just the three children mentioned afterwards, for the expression is a general one, but they do certainly fall under this category, and it is only they who are named.

The command which the Prophet receives is supported by the words: for the whole land is whoring, whoring away from Jehovah (falling away from Jehovah). **מִתְזַנְּת**: evidently a metaphorical expression here designating apostasy from Jehovah to idolatry, according to the conception of Israel's relation to Jehovah as that of a marriage. He who serves idols accordingly commits whoredom and breaks the marriage vow, is unfaithful to a lawful spouse, because surrendering himself to a stranger, with whom no marriage relation can exist. This notion of infidelity is further indicated expressly by the addition: **מִתְזַנְּת מִיְהוָה** is a significant composite preposition, which expresses not merely absence from Jehovah, but conveys the notion that a relation, the direct opposite of **מִתְזַנְּת מִיְהוָה**, has been entered into, and therefore expresses forcibly a position of infidelity, of a discontinuance of fidelity. On this notion of **זָנָה** in a spiritual sense, see the Doctrinal Section. As **זָנָה הָאֶרֶץ** expressed the intensity of the apostasy, so **מִתְזַנְּת** expresses forcibly its extent. As the sequel shows, it is the inhabitants of the kingdom of Israel who are meant. This whole sentence gives the ground of the command which the Prophet receives to take a wife of whoredom. He is to take a wife who commits bodily unchastity because the whole land commits whoredom spiritually. Why? The most natural answer is: In order to hold up to the people a mirror in which they might behold their guilt, and thus to bring to their consciousness more surely and powerfully than could be done by mere didactic discourse, how greatly they, by their idolatry, had sinned against their God, and dishonored Him. God would thus be represented as standing in a position which would hardly be imputed to a man, namely, that of living in marriage with a woman given up to adultery; or that such a relation would be as dishonoring to God as marriage with a whorish woman would be to a prophet. But the taking of this wife had, besides, the express

purpose of begetting children with her, who by their names should announce to Israel the punishment incurred by its guilt. For to the people (represented by the woman and her 'נָדָרִי) was to be presented the consequence of their whoredom, and it was to be brought to their consciousness what punishments their rightful husband, Jehovah, would inflict as the consequences of their infidelity.

The children, as 'נָדָרִי, represent the children of Israel in their guilt, but, at the same time, by their names, the punishment thereby entailed, and as those names, significant of punishment, are affixed to those who represent the guilt, the fact is expressed that the punishment is directly consequent upon the guilt.

It is clearly incorrect to lay stress upon 'נָדָרִי and the alliance of the Prophet with the woman, by itself considered, and so give to the thought a positive turn: that, by the Prophet's marriage with a lewd woman, and by the announcement of its results and by the names of the children, it was intended to be illustrated how Jehovah entered into a marriage with the faithless nation of Israel through Hosea, and that the children and the consequences of such marriage would represent severe chastisements from the hand of love (Löwe). This notion is imported into the sentence. In so far as it is correct, it belongs to chap. iii. and not here. But of an alliance being entered into between Jehovah and the disloyal people, there is nothing said even there, simply because Jehovah had, on his part, entered into such a marriage with the people long before. To infer from the fact of the Prophet's marriage that God entered into the same alliance would be a false application of the image. The Prophet cannot be conceived of as standing already in that relation. He must contract this marriage in order to symbolize Jehovah's marriage with the people *already existing*. It would be just as baseless, however, to infer from this marriage contracted by Hosea with the woman, that the original covenant between God and his people at Sinai is to be represented; that God had concluded the alliance with the people as with a pure virgin, and that they became unchaste after they came under the covenant; that therefore also 'נָדָרִי is not a woman who has already practiced lewdness, but that an undefiled virgin is to be understood, of whom, however, it was foreseen that she would become unfaithful and bear children of adultery. Apart from the emphasis placed upon the words 'נָדָרִי, this view is seen to stand in direct contradiction to the causal sentence: "for the land," etc. Because the land commits whoredom must the prophet take a maiden who will become unchaste? No. "The marriage which the prophet was to contract was simply intended to symbolize the relation already existing between Jehovah and Israel, and not the way in which it had come into existence. The wife does not represent the nation of Israel in its virgin state, when the covenant was being concluded at Sinai, but the nation of the Ten Tribes in its relation to Jehovah at the period of the prophet, when that kingdom, considered as a whole, had become a wife of whoredom, and in its several members resembled children of whoredom." (Keil.)

Ver. 3. Took Gomer, a daughter of Diblaim.

The command is obeyed without delay. גָּמַר occurs elsewhere only as the name of a nation: Gen.

x. 2, 3; Ezek. xxxviii. 6. If the name be taken here symbolically, the derivation from גָּמַר might afford the signification, "completion." i. e., not an nihilation, utter ruin; but, completion of whoredom = completed whoredom (so already Aben Ezra, Jerome). According to First it is also possible to explain, "fire-glow," literally, a being consumed with passion. גָּמַר occurs only as a proper name. In attempts to interpret it, it is usually explained as = גָּבִלִים, fig-cakes (so already Jerome), in which an allusion is perceived to chap. iii. ver. 1, where raisin-cakes appear as an image of that idolatry which ministers to sensuality. "Daughter of fig-cakes" would then = loving fig-cakes, or more generally, *deliciis dedita*. The identification of גָּבִלִים and גָּמַר has its difficulties, however. First supposes that the root גָּבַל, besides the sense, press together, from which we

have גָּבִלָה, fig-cake, has also the signification, enclose, and thus gains the meaning, embracing (strictly, as in the dual form: double-embracing, copulation), therefore: daughter of embraces. And this would naturally mean, not the fruit of such embraces, but (as in the other explanation, expressing a connection or intercourse), abandoned to embraces, *complexibus dedita*. The interpretation of these names is accordingly attended with difficulties. For we cannot say that in themselves they necessarily demand such an explanation, at least so far as our knowledge of the Hebrew language permits us to judge. But it cannot be adduced against the admissibility of such interpretation that the names are not elucidated for us as are those in vers. 4 ff. "This may be simply explained from the circumstance that the name was not given to the woman, but that she had it already when the prophet married her" (Keil). If the names have really these meanings, it is clear that a woman designated, "*consummata in scortatione, complexibus dedita*," would be a striking picture of Israel, uttering a severe rebuke.

[Henderson, holding the literal interpretation of the narrative, maintains that there is no need of assuming any symbolical meaning whatever for these names. On the other hand, if the narrative be not the record of actual occurrences, the necessity of a symbolical interpretation of the names is manifest. Most of the English expositors who note the names show a general agreement with the explanations: completed whoredom, and: given up to dainties. — J. F. M.]

And she conceived and bore to him a son. The taking of the wife had evidently in view the birth of children. That the woman conceived by the prophet, and that the son is to be regarded as his, is clear even from the simple connection of the words, but is placed beyond question by the express addition: bore to him. The opinion that the children were illegitimate, has arisen only from the false assumption, at variance with the context, that the woman must have formerly been a virgin; for the designation, 'נָדָרִי, must then be justified, and if she were not such before marriage, she must have become unchaste after it.

Vers. 4, 5. Then the Lord said to him: Call his name Jezreel — in the valley of Jezreel. The names of the children were to be significant, in view of the announcement of punishment, and must therefore be determined by God. That of the first child was to be Jezreel. This was to the

house of Jehu a *nomen cum onine*, on account of the significant connection of the "plain of Jezreel" with that family. It should remind them of that place and of that which occurred there. It cried out to them according to the meaning of the word, "God will disperse," and thus threatened punishment for what was there transacted; and also, according to what follows, presented to their fears the "plain of Jezreel" as the place where the punishment should be inflicted. **Blood-guiltiness of Jezreel.** Jehu had, by one fearful massacre, exterminated the whole house of Ahab in the city of Jezreel (2 Kings ix. 30; x. 17). This city was situated in the plain of Jezreel, which lay in the well-known Valley of Kishon. Now there appears this difficulty: Jehu did this at the express command of God through Elisha (2 Kings ix. 1 ff.), and the deed was afterwards commended by God (x. 30), and yet it is to be avenged as murder upon Jehu's house. It might be said that in the mind of the author of the books of the Kings, and in that of the prophet, there were different views with regard to the violent overthrow of Ahab's house. But the prophet also could regard the overthrow of a family like that of Ahab only as a merited judgment of God, and hold the same view with reference to the extension of the massacre to Ahaziah of Judah and his brethren, by reason of their connection with the house of Ahab. The correct solution may be seen in the words of Keil: "The apparent contradiction is resolved simply by distinguishing between the act itself and the motive by which Jehu was instigated. Regarded in itself, as a fulfillment of the command of God, the extermination of Ahab's family was an act for which Jehu could not be held criminal." But the motive which actuated Jehu was not at all the desire to fulfill the will of the Lord; for, even if he did not use the command of God as a cover for his own selfish and ambitious feelings, he did yet in no way enter into the intention of the Divine injunction. God desired that the kingdom of Israel should be cleansed from idolatry by the extermination of the house of Ahab and the elevation of a new dynasty. In that purpose lay the justification of the deed, which was to be simply a judgment of God upon idolatry. But Jehu, though ceasing from the worship of Baal, retained the worship of the calves. He fulfilled God's command indeed, but only went half way. After he had gained the throne, to which God had destined him, he struck out for himself a false path, from a false policy in which he thought it advisable to retain the worship of the calves, and thus rendered God's intentions nugatory. Thus was the bloody deed of Jehu divested of all real value, and thus it entailed a burden of guilt upon him and his house (wherefore also the possession of the throne was promised to him only to the fourth generation). This section of the book shows directly that the idolatry countenanced by Jehu and his house is to be brought into connection with his deed as an act of blood-guiltiness, for "the whoring of the land" is expressly designated as the sin to be punished (ver. 2). Such apostasy from Jehovah (this is the first announcement), is to be punished by the way in which the deed of blood in Israel is regarded and avenged as a sinful act of blood-guiltiness. The ground of the resentment towards that act therefore does not lie in the deed itself, but the punishment is inflicted for something else without which it would not have been incurred. The objection therefore is not just which maintains that this deed cannot be the crowning crime of Jehu and his house. Nor is

there any discrepancy between the prophet and the books of the Kings, where all the members of that house are adduced as guilty by not departing from the sin of Jerusalem. [Pusey: "Jehu, by cleaving against the will of God to Jeroboam's sin, which served his own political ends, showed that in the slaughter of his master he acted not as he pretended, out of zeal (2 Kings x. 16) for the will of God, but served his own will and his own ambition only. By his disobedience to the one command of God he showed that he would equally have disobeyed the other, had it been contrary to his own will or interest. He had no principle of obedience. And so the blood which was shed according to the righteous judgment of God, became sin to him who shed it in order to fulfill not the will of God but his own. Thus God said to Baasha: 'I exalted thee out of the dust and made thee prince over my people Israel,' which he became by slaying his master the son of Jeroboam and all the house of Jeroboam (1 Kings xvi. 2). Yet because he followed the sins of Jeroboam, 'the word of the Lord came against Baasha for all the evil that he did in the sight of the Lord in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he killed him' (ver. 7). The two courses of action were inconsistent: to destroy the son and the house of Jeroboam, and to do those things for which God condemned him to be destroyed. Further yet; not only was such execution of God's judgments itself an offense against Almighty God, but it was sin, whereby he condemned himself, and made his other sins to be sins against the light. In executing the judgment of God against another, he pronounced his judgment against himself, in that he that judged, in God's stead, did the same things (Rom. ii. 1)." M.]

Will visit: alluding to extermination which corresponds to the act of Jehu. It followed not long after the death of Jeroboam II. in the murder of his son through the conspiracy of Shallum (2 Kings xv. 8 ff.). But the threatening goes further: will utterly destroy the kingdom of the house of Israel. "House of Israel" here designates the kingdom of Israel in a special sense, the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, as distinguished from the house of Jehu (ver. 7). The kingly office in general should cease in the kingdom of Israel, and that would naturally be a cessation of the kingdom itself. But this was connected with the fall of the house of Jehu, because, in consequence of that event, a state of the wildest anarchy ensued, so that only one king, Menahem, had a son for successor, the rest being all overthrown and slain by conspirators. The fall of that house was therefore "the beginning of the end, the beginning of the process of rejection" (Hengstenberg).

Ver. 5. And it happens in that day, that I break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. "That day" is the day on which the destruction of the kingdom takes place. "Bow of Israel" "by synecdoche for the military force on which the strength of the kingdom and consequently its existence rested" (Keil). The valley of Jezreel is the plain in which the city Jezreel lay, in the Apocrypha and Josephus: τὸ μέγα πεδῖον Ἐσδραϊκῶν, or simply: τὸ μέγα πεδῖον. There the threat was to be fulfilled, because it was there that the bloody deed was committed. It was, moreover, the natural battle-field of the northern kingdom (comp. Judges iv 5; vi. 33). Israel forms here an unmistakable paronomasia with Jezreel. The words, and especially also the mention of a locality, point clearly to a battle, ~~and~~ an overthrow, by which the before-named destruc-

ion of the kingdom should be effected, and thus in this sentence not only is the punishment indicated, but the mode of its infliction stated. The enemy who should effect this annihilation of the kingdom is not yet indicated. No definite enemy is named before the second part of the book where Assyria is brought forward. (It is not mentioned in the books of the Kings where Assyria dealt this blow.)

Vers. 6, 7. And she conceived again and bore a daughter, — by horses and riders. The second child is a daughter who receives the symbolical name: **לֹא רַחֲמָה** [See Gram. Note]. That the second child should be a daughter is not a voucher for the necessity of the literal view, but is grounded in the inner connection between the female sex and compassion. The announcement that there was no more compassion, becomes so much the more emphatic as the representative of the nation which was not to find compassion was a daughter. For the "female sex finds more compassion than the male," and yet there is no compassion to be found. That must be a sad case indeed! The explanation is incorrect which supposes that the daughter signifies a more degenerate race (e. g., Jerome). For I will no longer have any compassion. An explanation, telling what the name of the daughter implies, namely, the exhaustion of Divine compassion. The kingdom owed its preservation in the midst of the prevailing idolatry only to the undeserved compassion of God. [On the rest of ver. 6, see Gram. Note.]

Ver. 7. But I will have compassion on the house of Judah. A keen reproach for the house of Israel; if they were like the house of Judah, they too would find compassion; but they are not so; they live only by the compassion of Jehovah as is plain from the words. Why Judah finds favor, and Israel does not, is indicated in the words that follow, in the peculiarly emphatic expression: I will deliver them through Jehovah their God (comp. Gen. xix. 24). Here allusion is made to the connection in which Judah stands with Jehovah, while it contains, at least by implication, the thought that Judah owes its deliverance directly to the fact that it acknowledges Jehovah to be its God, and not, as is further said, to its military force, while Israel on the contrary, trusting in its military strength instead of in Jehovah who is its God no longer, shall for that very reason, and in spite of its warlike resources, utterly perish. By war is an unexpected expression as occurring along with the other words; but it naturally means not: by weapons of war, but obviously: by waging war. The bow and the sword are named as the weapons, and the words: by war, show more definitely that the employment of those weapons is meant. Horses and riders, according to a familiar mode of expression, indicate the force which completed the military strength in which so much pride was taken. The occurrence of these words at the close is specially emphatic. When Jehovah delivers, He needs no weapons of war, no horses or riders, nor can these give any help without Him.

Vers. 8, 9. And she weaned Lo-Ruhamah, will not be yours. The weaning and the conception are to be taken together, that is, as soon as she had weaned, she again conceived, in order to indicate the continuity of the announcement of evil. There is no interruption until the end of the rejection. [Henderson: "The mention of the

weaning of Lo-Ruhamah seems designed rather to fill up the narrative than to describe figuratively any distinct treatment of the Israelites." J. F. M.] Not my people: thus should the people in the kingdom of Israel be designated. The covenant relation between God and his people is to be completely dissolved. **לֹא יִהְיֶה לִּי** = I will not belong to you [see Gramm. Note]. On the relation of the three threatenings to one another, see the Doctrinal Section (2). On the whole narrative see Introd. § 3.

B. Chap. ii. 1-3. And yet Israel shall be accepted again.

Immediately upon the announcement of the judgment extending even to the complete rejection of the kingdom of Israel, follows, to the surprise of the reader, an announcement of deliverance. The verses, in distinction from the Hebrew arrangement, should form one section with chap. i. The arrangement by which vers. 1 and 2 are joined to chap. i., and a new chapter begun with ver. 3, as is done by the LXX. and Jerome, and after them by Luther, is more incorrect still.

Chap. ii. 1. And the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, — children of the living God. The promise in ver. 1 a, agrees almost verbatim with the promise of Gen. xxii. 17 and xxxii. 13, an agreement which is designed. The rejection of the Ten Tribes just announced forms a strong contrast to the promise there made to the patriarch with regard to the boundless increase of his posterity. Now if the promise is firmly believed one might have doubts of the rejection, or if the threatening of the Prophet were to be accepted one might feel that he had mistaken the promise. Hence the Prophet goes back directly to that promise, and shows how the promise is in no way annulled by the threatening, but that the latter agrees well with the former, which will certainly reach its fulfillment. (Comp. also the reference to that promise in Is. x. 22, in opposition to false security, and in Jer. xxxiii. 22). The promise given to the fathers is just the pledge that a time of deliverance will come again! The announcement of deliverance in ver. 1 ff. is rooted in that promise. Thus the words are strictly to be regarded as a citation — and yet

what was promised will come true, that, etc., **כִּי יִשְׁרָאֵל** is therefore naturally to be understood of the people of Israel generally (against Keil). For the promise is made with reference to the whole people, and in ver. 2 mention is made expressly of a union between those who had been divided. But that enlargement of the whole body cannot take place with the return of those whose rejection is now announced. Hence the second member of the verse turns to them. For those who are here called "not my people" are naturally identical with those referred to in chap. i. 9. In the place in which it is said to them, etc. There is no need of inquiring what place is meant, whether Palestine or the Land of Exile. The expression has rather the more general sense: "Just as it has been said — so will it now rather be said," etc. The one will answer exactly to the other Children of the living God. Instead of simply my people, or, people of God, which would be expected at first, we have here a much stronger expression. **אֵל לֹא** naturally in opposition to dead idols, whose service brings the people to ruin. They are not merely a people of God, but his chil-

dren: they shall have in Him not merely a God but a Father (see below in the Doctrinal Section). There is no allusion here to the moral ground of this gracious acceptance, and such a notion must not be introduced. For to the darkness of the first part (chap. i.) the light is here contrasted quite abruptly and in a way quite unprovided for. The connecting link is not found before the more profound exhibition of the subject in chap. ii. It is understood, of course, that only a remnant is to meet with compassion, but it is not here expressed.

Vers. 2, 3. And the children of Judah and the children of Israel are gathered together—**Ruhamah**. The acceptance of the rejected ones by God will be followed by a reunion of those who had been separated (inwardly as well as outwardly)—on the one side belief in God, on the other idolatry. Comp. Jer. i. 4, which rests upon our passage, and iii. 18, and still more fully Ezek. xxxvii. 15 ff. The children of Israel, by being contrasted with the children of Judah, receive here their more restricted and special meaning, as belonging to the Ten Tribes. The words: appoint for themselves one head, denoting one common king, express this union still more definitely (comp. chap. iii. 5; Ezek. xxxiv. 24; xxxvii. 24). And go up out of the land. These words are difficult. "The land" is, according to most, the land of Exile, and a return from it would therefore be expressed. It is certain that the Prophet does not in our section predict a leading away into exile; for "the place," etc., in ver. 1 is not necessarily to be understood of a foreign land. Yet the remark of Reinke is not incorrect: When it is said of Israel that they are no more a people of God, and will no more receive compassion, the fact is presupposed that they could remain no longer in the Holy Land which they had received as God's people and had retained through his mercy. Already in Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. banishment into an enemy's country was threatened to the people as the punishment of obdurate apostasy. It may be objected, however, that by this explanation, the Prophet would seem to have presupposed an exile of Judah, while he says absolutely nothing of it, but, on the contrary, distinguishes in chap. i. 7, Judah from Israel. Difficulty is felt further

in the indefinite expression: **עֲלֵה מִן־הָאָרֶץ**, which gives no hint of a land of exile. Reinke, however, as after him Keil, gives this explanation: The prophet refers to Ex. i. 10 and borrows the expression from that passage, a supposition put beyond doubt by chap. ii. 16, 17, where the re-acceptance of Israel is represented as a leading through the wilderness to Canaan, and a parallel is drawn to the leading forth out of Egypt, as in chaps. viii. 13; ix. 3, the carrying into Exile is described as a carrying into Egypt (comp. also already Deut. xxviii. 68). Egypt was thus a type of the heathen world, over which Israel was to be dispersed; the deliverance from Egypt a type and earnest of deliverance from captivity and dispersion among the heathen. Well: but would **עֲלֵה מִן־הָאָרֶץ**, an altogether general expression, intelligible in itself, have been a strictly technical term for "going up out of Egypt." And upon the single passage, Ex. i. 10, in which, moreover, no allusion is really made to a withdrawal from Egypt as from a land of captivity, but Pharaoh only speaks of a departure of the Israelites from it could such a linguistic usage have been based, that **עֲלֵה מִן־הָאָרֶץ** would have been under-

stood correctly without any explanation? No other passages occur upon which such a usage could have been founded, and none in which it actually occurs. In chap. ii. 15, *e. g.*, "Egypt" is expressly mentioned. No matter how much, therefore, may be said for this explanation as being actually correct, it cannot be approved unconditionally. Others therefore understand "the land," simply of Palestine. "Going up out of the land," is thus viewed either as a marching up to Jerusalem (Simson), and to this the context gives much support, especially in the reference to the reunion of Israel and Judah under one head (David). This would imply that Jerusalem would become again the common central point of the nation. But to this also objection may be made (in another direction) to the too general expression **עֲלֵה מִן־הָאָרֶץ**. The *terminus a quo* would then be quite irrelevant. Why then mention this *terminus a quo*, and omit the *terminus ad quem*—to Jerusalem (Zion), which is the important point?

Hence **עֲלֵה מִן־הָאָרֶץ** is regarded by others as a marching forth to victory (Ewald), as David did. The comparison with Mic. ii. 14 f. is certainly a fitting one. The preceding words, about their marshalling, and uniting and appointing one head, also suit this view well; one is led to think in this of a rising up to vigorous action (because *viribus unitis*). This explanation demands the mention of the place whither this **עֲלֵה** was to be directed less than the others. But perhaps it is indicated in the following still more obscure sentence: for great is the day of Jezreel. This naturally refers back to chap. i. 4, 5. But there Jezreel was the place of overthrow of divine judgment. Keil supposes the same thing is meant here also, that that day of defeat was great, *i. e.*, decisive, glorious, because it formed the critical occasion by which the return of the recreant and their reunion with Judah were rendered possible! Others think of the appellative meaning of the name Jezreel, which certainly appears in chap. ii. 24, 25: God sows. This use of the term is supposed to express the notion that the Valley of Jezreel, in consequence of the overthrow there suffered, becomes a place where God sows the seed of the people's renovation. Keil also admits this as a secondary allusion. But to understand by **יּוֹם יִזְרְעֵאל**, that day of disaster, and to suppose that a day of defeat is called great on account of its good remote results, is a far-fetched notion. Here in chap. ii. 1, 2, in the announcement of deliverance, we find ourselves upon other ground than that of chap. i. 4 ff. What is here praised as great, is not and cannot be the same as that which in chap. i. is announced as punishment, but must be something of an opposite character. But if we leave out of view that day of battle, we have left only the vague notion: time of God's sowing, *i. e.*, when God plants as He had before rooted out, *i. e.*, the time of reacceptance; and such a time is designated as great by **גָּדוֹל**. But our sentence cannot be supposed to give utterance to such a general thought. The confirmatory **כִּי** does not suit such a view; for **יּוֹם יִזְרְעֵאל** alludes too definitely (as Keil has perceived correctly) to chap. i. 4, and therefore refers to a definite event; only not the same event, but one which is its counterpart. The sense evidently is this, that there where Israel was overthrown, and its bow broken, a victory will yet

be achieved: thither will the children of Israel and Judah gather themselves together under one king, marching up out of the country. And still the appellative significance of Jezreel may be retained; for by this victory God makes a new sowing or planting. Thus, as the threatening is connected with the names of the children, chap. i. 4 ff., so also is the promise: in the first name without any modification, in the other two by the change into their opposite by the omission of the **ש**. [The English expositors usually take the reference to be primarily to the return from the Babylonian captivity. Some of them (of whom Cowles is the latest) refer the fulfillment only to the consequences of the reign of Messiah, the "Head" chosen not only by the united children of Israel and Judah but also by the world. Henderson, denying any multiple sense in prophecy, interprets the "head" to be Zerubbabel, "because the Messiah, whom most suppose to be intended, is nowhere spoken of as appointed by men, but always as the choice and appointment of God." But (1) it is not said that they will appoint their leader to be the Messiah. That is of course God's appointment. (2.) The Messiah thus appointed must necessarily be the chosen leader of his people. It is the service of a "willing people" in which they engage. Even God always offers Himself to his people as their king. They are to choose whom they will serve. This argument is evidently only the plea of one who has a theory to uphold. As to the main application of these verses, it is probably best to regard its promise as partially and but to a very small degree fulfilled in the case of those out of the Ten Tribes who returned to Jerusalem after the Exile, and to be constantly undergoing its fulfillment in the increase of the true Israel until the "great multitude which no man could number of all nations" (the 144,000, the mystical number of those sealed of the twelve tribes of Israel), shall be completed. That the Messianic application is almost exclusively the true one is evident both from the grand comprehensiveness of the promise, and from the paucity of evidence as to subsequent reunion to any extent of the representatives of the two kingdoms. — M.]

Ver. 3. — Say to your brethren, Ammi, and to your sisters, Ruhamah. According to some the children of the Prophet are addressed. Those who had first called out to the people by their own names: Not-my-people! and Unfavored! are now to call out to them the opposite, the son to his brethren, the daughter to her sisters, that is, to the rest of the Israelites. According to others, it is the people who obtain mercy that are addressed, whose members are to salute one another with the new name bestowed on them by God (Hengstenberg, Keil, Umbreit). The latter is to be preferred. For the verse is naturally connected with the close of ver. 2, and it should therefore present the rejoicing shouts of the victors. Their victory is to them a pledge of their acceptance by God, which is to be celebrated by these joyful shouts, according to the requirement of the Prophet, or rather of God through him.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. One of the most profound conceptions of the Old Testament is that which regards the covenant relation between Jehovah and Israel as a marriage. As a consequence, Israel's idolatry and apostasy from God appear as whoredom or adul-

tery; for idols are paramours as contrasted with Jehovah the husband.

The fundamental elements of this conception are found as early as in the Pentateuch: Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15; Lev. xvii. 7; xx. 5, 6; Num. xiv. 33; (xv. 39); Deut. xxxi. 16; xxxii. 16, 21. Ex. xxxiv. 14, 15 must be regarded as the most important and the fundamental passage.

Other passages are Judges ii. 17; viii. 33; 1 Kings xiv. 24; xv. 12; xxii. 47; 2 Kings ix. 22, xxiii. 7; 1 Chron. vi. 25; 2 Chron. xxi. 11, 13. Further in the Psalms (if we leave Ps. xlv. out of the question); Ps. lxxiii. 27; cvi. 39.

Such passages of later time, as those from Chronicles, naturally presuppose the prophetic development of this doctrine. This is found first in our Prophet, who has made that conception the fundamental idea of his discourses, in some of which it is directly discussed, while it permeates others as an essential principle (*e. g.*, in chap. xi.). On the ground of these discourses it is more fully presented by Jeremiah (especially chaps. iii.; v. 7; xiii. 27, etc.), and Ezekiel (chaps. xvi.—xxiii.). It is only hinted at in Isaiah (chaps. i. 21; liv. 5; lvii. 3; lxii. 5). It is not met with in the other prophets. For Nahum iii. 4 ff. does not belong here (although the expressions show allusions to our prophet). Nor does Is. xxiii. 16 ff.; for there it is not idolatry that is represented by the whoredom of Nineveh and Tyre. In addition, on the positive side, namely, the love of Jehovah to Israel, we must name the Song of Solomon, which bears besides, unmistakable allusions to our Prophet. In the New Testament this conception returns, naturally modified in form, in the description of the great Whore, Rev. xvii. ff. (embracing, at the same time, the ideas that are found in the last-named passages concerning great and commercial cities). But the positive notion of a marriage of Jehovah to his people is found again in a New Testament form in Eph. v. 22 ff., though there in an inverted order; for an actual marriage is first taken, and a parallel is then drawn between it and the relation of Christ to the Church.

For the meaning and significance of this whole conception of Jehovah's relation to his people, our Prophet is, according to the above remarks, the best commentator in all his writings, and especially in chap. ii. See therefore the remarks upon that chapter.

2. "God will not be mocked" is the truth which the writings of the Prophet, written in letters of flame, bear upon their front in the announcement of the destroying judgments which God must and will inflict upon his apostate people. The mode of this announcement in our chapter through the three children with symbolical names, is full of instruction. The very fact that they represent the apostate children of Israel and declare by their names the punishment for this apostasy, sets forth unmistakably the close connection between sin and guilt, namely, that punishment is, so to speak, attached to sin. And the sudden appearance of the three children without any interval expresses evidently the certainty and unavoidable-ness of the infliction of the divine judgment. The three symbolic names, moreover, were given for the purpose of intensifying and emphasizing the announcement of the judgment. If the first name simply presages the fact of a retribution by an overwhelming judgment, the second unveils with terrible clearness its ground in the divine nature; it is that they shall no more find compassion, that God has turned away from them. And the resul-

of all this is that the nation ceases to be a people of God. Thus the whole significance of this judgment is exhibited. Destruction, the cessation of mercy, might be felt by any other people or kingdom; but with the people of God its influence was different, it was to them the loss of its special prerogative. Such a judgment has therefore a significance which is not merely political or social but also theocratic, and must be inflicted with a terrible severity elsewhere unfelt.

But it is most palpably enounced in our chapter how far judgment is from being the end of God's ways toward his people. Immediately after the three strokes of destruction, so to speak, had been dealt, the sun of divine favor breaks forth from the darkest clouds of divine judgment in the brightest splendor of words of deliverance, as three names are again sounded forth each more distinctly than the former. This great transformation is presented without the least preparation, evidently as an enigma, thus exciting the greatest desire for its solution. The connecting link between these two announcements so broadly contrasted; namely, on the side of God, love, in which even his wrath against his faithless people is rooted — if He were indifferent He would not be angry, — and on the side of man, a return to Him in consequence of the chastening of his judgments, is not yet displayed here. This is done by the longer exposition given in the following chapter.

3. A man may be the instrument of God and, by his acts, execute his will, and yet be rejected: so Jehu. Our position is determined by the relation which we inwardly bear to that will, according to the simple truth that God regards the heart, whether we make the desires of God our own and are willing to be nothing but his instruments and to serve Him, or whether we assert and claim a place for our own interests, and thus in truth seek our own will and not the will of God. If we in this seek our own ends, the result is inevitable; our execution of the divine will is impeded and disturbed, if it is not rather only a seeming fulfillment and our labors abortive.

4. The New Testament conception of sonship with God, has as its Old Testament correlative that of a people of God. This places God in a close, unique relation to men. But God appears there as only Lord and King, though bestowing blessings and offering the conditions of life; and man, to whom He thus stands in relation, is not the individual but only the people of God as a whole. Therefore also this government of God has for one of its aims the restoration and preservation of the outward conditions of national existence, including the natural basis of such a community, the land itself. Under the New Covenant there is also a people of God, but the individuals, who constitute the whole, are all regarded as children of God.

But in another direction the Old Testament notion of a people of God tends undeniably towards the New Testament conception of sonship, and thus shows itself to be a germ ever developing with living power as the earnest of its fruit. All Israel appears as a son of God in the significant passage, Ex. xi. 22; comp. further Hos. xi. 1. The Israelites themselves are also called "sons of God," Deut. xiv. 1; xxxii. 19, and here in our chapter. But these are only single whispers, and the grand distinction must not be overlooked, that this expression is applied only to the totality of the people, even when it relates to their great

multitude. Moreover our passage is contained in an announcement with regard to the future, and we must hold beyond question that the prophets go beyond the stand-point of the Old Covenant. It is just as Paul declares in Gal. iv. 1 ff. Israel indeed actually held the position of sonship toward God, but ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ὁ κληρον. νήπιός ἐστιν οὐδὲν διαφέρει δούλου. Only the incarnation of the Son of God Himself in an individual person could confer the privilege of the relation of individual and personal sonship towards God, the *υἱοθεσία* of individual personality.

5. How is the promise in chap. ii. 1-3 fulfilled? We might at first be inclined to seek the fulfillment in the return of the people from Babylonish Exile. For that event certainly marks the turning-point where God's judgment upon his people reached its end and his favor again shone upon them. But in truth we cannot yet discern the accomplishment of the prophecy in that event. It could hardly be the subject of the promise, inasmuch as the Prophet only speaks and knows here of a judgment upon the Ten Tribes. But if a return from the Assyrian Exile and a consequent reunion with the kingdom of Judah had taken place, we might expect to see in these events a fulfillment of the promise. But such a return and consequent remission of the judgment upon the kingdom of Israel never took place; and the return from the Babylonish Exile affected that kingdom but very slightly, and brought about only to a very small degree a season of deliverance. God's favor returned, in deed, inasmuch as this period was an assurance that God had not utterly rejected his people, and the hope of the fulfillment of the prophetic promises became so much the brighter. But it was not the fulfillment itself. No; to arrive at that we have only to look at our promise a little more closely.

Before the eye of the Prophet there is evidently standing here a picture of a people of Israel, not only innumerable increased and united into one kingdom, but also actually realizing the idea of a people of God ("sons of the living God"). That is, the time which he promises is in his mind directly the "time of fulfillment," which we, upon the ground of other prophecies, since Hosea himself scarcely speaks of the Messiah (not even in chap. iii. 5), must designate the Messianic. Hence we can in no case seek the fulfillment in events which transpired before the advent of the Messiah.

But now the Messiah has come in Jesus of Nazareth. Is this promise of prophecy already fulfilled? Is this picture of the future already realized? If we keep to the words of the Text we must answer, No.

In fact the coming of the Messiah did not bring for Israel, as a whole, the time of deliverance, but on account of its guilt, rather a time of rejection, and the consequence was the infliction of a new and still more complete judgment. It is quite clear also that we cannot find the fulfillment of the present promise in the acceptance of the Messiah by the comparatively few who did accept Him. Must we then say that God did indeed design for the people in the Messiah such blessings as are here promised; but that, since they rejected Him, the promised time will never be theirs? In one respect this is perfectly true. But we cannot rest satisfied with it. The prophetic promise with all its rich fullness of meaning would then simply fall to the ground.

But still more unjustifiable is the assumption that the promise is to be regarded as only sus

pended for the people of Israel during the time of their obduracy, and to expect its fulfillment in that nation when it shall be converted to the Messiah. For this opinion, though so much favored of late, simply holds mechanically and restrictively to the letter, with a complete misconception of the nature of the Old and New Testament and their mutual relations, and of the higher plane to which divine Revelation rose with Christ, and supposes it possible that Revelation could retreat from the standpoint of the fulfillment to that of the Old Testament preparation, where Israel as a people represented the kingdom of God. It would assume also that allusion was made to the one kingdom only, for the purpose of showing that the distinction between children of Judah and children of Israel was lost by the extinction of the whole kingdom, even of the kingdom of Judah, independently of the consummation of the reunion under one head here promised. And therefore a promise which takes that division for granted and holds out the prospect of its removal and conversion into a higher unity, cannot be regarded as one whose fulfillment (according to the plain sense of the words) is still to be expected; or is that division of the two kingdoms, which no longer exist, yet to take place, in order that it may at some time be removed? If we have to give up the main position of this assumption of a literal fulfillment yet to be accomplished, on account of its intrinsic impossibility, all support is taken away from the notion that the promise will be realized in and for the people of Israel upon the soil of the Holy Land. It falls to pieces from internal weakness.

Instead, therefore, of dreaming of a future fulfillment in the literal sense, we must rather say, that the Prophet knows of a people of God only in the form of Israel, and hence what he hopes and promises for the people of God he hopes and promises for Israel, and in the form conditioned by Israel's history. But it has become clear to us under the New Testament through Christ: Israel was only a type, necessary for its time and chosen by God, of the true people of God, only a shell which contained the kernel in the mean while, but at the same time was also to protect it until the time of its maturity. But the shell was too small and must be burst; the kernel had not and has not sufficient room, and it would be reversing the order of things, after the kernel is laid bare to retain the shell. It is not the outward Israel that is God's people; it was just the period of its ruin, just the rejection of the Messiah at his coming by the external Israel that opened the way for this. It was made clear that a people as such was insufficient for this high calling, to be the chosen people of God, as the prophets themselves distinguished more and more between the mere external Israel and the true Israel, and saw the heathen coming to Zion and entering the breach. And though Israel is still held as the central point, the fulfillment is not in outward form, but ideally, *inasmuch as Christ came the "Saviour of the Jews;"* Israel therefore remaining the root in which the others were engrafted. We can understand now the promise of the innumerable increase (chap. ii. 1). Literally it would apply to the people of Israel, but can only apply to them as the people of God; and even though the older prophets say nothing as yet of the calling of the Gentiles, as Micah and Isaiah do, *we have now assuredly a right to abandon the notion of an increase of the external Israel, and to see the fulfillment in the founding of a people of God by Christ just in the*

time of the final ruin of Israel, who have become, especially by the conversion of the heathen, a numberless multitude, and will become still more numerous. Then the reunion of the divided kingdoms is an essential element in the Messianic picture of the future held up in prophecy, as this very passage shows. This is altogether natural. Since prophecy knows a people of God only in the form of the people of Israel, it was necessary, if salvation was to be brought by the reign of the Messiah, that the breach, so harmful to God's people, and the fruitful source, even more than the consequence, of apostasy from Jehovah, should be removed. If Israel was to be described as becoming converted to God, it must also be represented as returning to its unity under the divinely chosen House of David. This element also in the promise belongs naturally to its form, the form which it must naturally assume under the Old Covenant. As in the New Testament it was declared that the outward Israel was not to constitute God's people for all time, this element lost its significance; we cannot expect a literal fulfillment of this promise, but the idea which lies at its foundation has been and is being realized, that is, the idea of the real unity of God's people under one head of the house of David, who was, however, more than the son of David, namely, under Christ. These promises have thus a higher range than the Prophet conceives, and find their fulfillment in a far higher sense than he hopes, and as they are thus more than mere human aspirations and pious wishes, they are seen to proceed from the Spirit of God, who preformed and provided the New Covenant in the Old. So little does this view do away with the divine authority of the prophetic word, that it is rather its only real attestation and adequate expression, unlike the other literalizing view disproved above.

But if the reproach of spiritualizing should be brought against this conception, our defense is that we only spiritualize in reference to Old Testament promises, along with the Apostles, and would not be more realistic than they, who (1 Pet. ii. 10; Rom. ix. 25, 26), although fully aware of the literal sense of our passages, yet do expressly refer them to the conversion of the heathen. Peter in the same connection (ver. 9) sets the New Testament people of God, Christians, directly in the place of those of the Old Testament, and therefore the former are now the true Israel. This extension with reference to the heathen is also quite consequent. If the words: not my people, were once pronounced over Israel, it was because they had sunk quite to the level of the heathen. And if they are to be received again, they would be received just as those who had actually become like heathen; and it is no longer right to exclude the heathen, who are behind them in no respect. But there is this difference between the reacceptance and the first choice. When the Israelites were chosen they were not in positive opposition to God, but now they are so; and therefore a longer exclusion of the heathen would be a particularizing to a greater extent than their disciplinary training demanded; it would be a violation of justice. For the rest: Paul declares clearly that Israel itself shall not be excluded (Rom. xi. 26). Only thus should the people of God attain to its full increase (And surely, in the fact of the preservation of Israel in its nationality even under the New Testament, we may see a promise of this conversion although that wonderful preservation by God's providence is to be regarded in its most patent as-

pect as a part of the judgment decreed upon Israel by God. It is preserved as a living witness of the rejection decreed by God on account of its unbelief and rejection of the Messiah.) Only Paul says not a word, when promising Israel's conversion, that would lead us to think that a people of God, *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, will be continued, not a word of the "glory of the kingdom of Israel," though his heart beat so warily (comp. chap. ix.) towards his nation in its outward sense.

Finally we have only further to remark that in our references to the Messianic period inaugurated by Christ, as the time of the fulfilment of the prophetic promises, "Messianic time" is taken in the fullest sense of the term, and the whole course of the New Testament dispensation, from its foundation to its completion, is regarded as one whole, so that we have not yet attained to the perfect fulfilment, although the promises of prophecy have been undergoing their realization since the time of Christ. "For it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The fulfilment is not yet complete, but we stand in expectation of it. This perfect realization consists least in the literal fulfilment with respect to the external Israel alone, but it too, in so far as it is converted to the Messiah, will have a share in the complete salvation ready for all who will be converted to God through Christ.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL

Ver. 2. STARKE: All departure from God's Word and from true religion is a spiritual whoredom. Blessed are they who beware of this!

Ver. 4. STARKE: As a good intention without God's counsel does not make a cause good, so it cannot be said that the divine will has been fulfilled, when it has been executed with a perverted heart and not in accordance with the divine purposes. (Comp. the Doctrinal and Ethical section, No. 3.)

WÜRT. SUMM.: God's wrath often falls upon posterity, and they must suffer for the sins of their forefathers, if they walk in their evil footsteps (Ex. xx. 5).

TUB. BIBLE: Public sins of a whole nation or of its kings and princes are followed by a general judgment of God, by which whole lands are destroyed.

[PUSEY: So awful a thing it is to be the instrument of God in punishing or reproving others if we do not by his grace keep our own hearts and hands pure from sin. — M.]

Ver. 6. WÜRT. SUMM.: Behold here the severity of the divine wrath. God is certainly compassionate, but his compassion is regulated by his holy righteousness. His compassion exceeds all human petitions and understanding; but his wrath goes beyond all human reckoning. Men may keep on sinning against our beloved God too long, so that when He has waited long exhorting them to repentance, and they do not follow Him, his words at last are: "Lo-Ruhamah Lo-Ammi." Beware of this and do not defer your repentance; for God may soon become as angry as He was merciful.

Ver. 7. CRAMER: When human help ceases, divine help begins. He is not limited to the use of means, but is Himself our Help and Shield.

[BURROUGHS: The more immediate the hand of God appears in his mercy to his people, the more sweet and precious ought that mercy then to be. *Dulcius ex ipso fonte*. Created mercies are the most perfect mercies. — M.]

STARKE: Woe to him whose God the Lord will no longer be. Let men therefore beware lest by presumptuous sin they trifle away all intercourse with God.

RIEGER: When God thus renounces those who were his people, it is much more lamentable than any severance between those who are married or betrothed. "I will be your God and ye shall be my people," was the formula of the covenant. They had broken the last condition by their unbelief; and thus they stirred up the Lord to anger so that He renounced the first. Yet He has not expressly retracted the whole formula of the covenant. He did not say: I will not be your God, but He cut short his words in anger: I will not be yours. Thus room is left for that mercy which shall awake anew for them.

Ver. 9. The threatenings are indeed terrible: but how merciful it was in God to announce the judgment before it comes; and the plainer and more striking these threatenings are the greater the mercy. This is a ground for hoping that the judgment will be averted.

Chap. ii. ver. 1. This is the order and method of God's dealings: He slays, not that He may keep under the power of death, but that He may bring to repentance. Thus He dispersed Israel among the heathen, and without any compassion and mercy, as it seemed to outward observation, rejected them utterly. For the Ten Tribes have not yet returned to their own land. But how abundantly has God compensated to them this misfortune! For those who were scattered among the heathen, He gathered again by the Gospel, and so gathered them that a great multitude of the heathen came to the knowledge of the kingdom of Christ along with the remnant in the kingdom of Israel. He points the people of Israel to this compensation, that they may not despond in such affliction, as we also assuage, by the hope of the future glory, prepared for us by the death of Christ, the sorrows of those calamities which we see before our eyes.

[BURROUGHS: If we expect God to be a living God to us, it becomes us not to have dead hearts in his service. If God be active for our good, let us be active for his honor. — M.]

Ver. 2. STARKE: The Church of the New Testament has only one Head, who is Christ. Blessed are we if we cleave to and follow Him!

[MATTHEW HENRY: To believe in Christ is to appoint Him to ourselves for our Head, that is, to consent to God's appointment and willingly to submit to his guidance and appointment; and this in concurrence and communion with all good Christians who make Him their Head; so that though they are many, yet in Him they are one, and so become one with each other. *Qui conveniunt in aliquo tertio inter se conveniunt*. — M.]

Ver. 3. The prophet gives the best application of the names which God bade him apply to his children in order that the Christian Church may be convinced thereby that all the former things are reversed, that wrath is done away, and that the unfathomable compassion and mercy of God stand open to every man. For how should God, after He gave his son, not with Him have given all things? This word "say" belongs to the office of public preaching. We are to understand by it that the servants of God in the New Testament are commanded to comfort believers, and to declare to them that they stand in mercy and are a people of God.

[PUSEY: The words "my people" are words of

hope in prophecy; they become words of joy in each stage of fulfillment. They are words of mutual joy and gratulation when obeyed; they are words of encouragement until obeyed. God is reconciled to us, and willeth that we should be reconciled to Him. — M.]

FULLER DISCOURSE OF JEHOVAH CONCERNING HIS ADULTEROUS SPOUSE, ISRAEL.

CHAPTER II. 4-25.

A. *Complaint and Threatening of Punishment.*

VERSES 4-15.

- 4 Plead with your mother, plead !
For she is not my wife
And I am not her husband,
That she put away her whoredom from before her
And her adultery from between her breasts.
- 5 Lest I strip her naked,
And place her as (she was in) the day of her birth,
And make her like the wilderness,
And set her (so as to be) like a barren land,
And slay her with hunger.
- 6 And on her children I will not have mercy,
For they are children of whoredom
- 7 Because their mother has committed whoredom
And she that bore them has caused shame,
Because she said: I will go after my lovers,
Who furnished my bread and my water,
My wool and my flax,
My oil and my (pleasant) drinks.
- 8 Therefore behold I am hedging up thy way with thorns,
And will wall up a wall [raise a wall before her]
And she will not find her paths.
- 9 And she will pursue her lovers and not overtake them
And will seek them and not find;
And she will say: I will go and return to my former husband
For (it was) better with me then than now.
- 10 And she did not know that I gave her
The corn and the wine and the oil,
And that I increased for her silver and gold,
(Which) they used for Baal.
- 11 Therefore will I take back my corn in its time
And my wine in its season,
And snatch away my wool and my flax
(Which was) to cover her nakedness,
- 12 And then will I uncover her shame
In the eyes of her lovers,
And none will deliver her from my hands.
- 13 And I will bring to an end all her joy;
Her feast-making, her new-moons, her sabbaths,
And all her festivals.
- 14 And will lay waste her vine and her fig tree
Of which she said: they are my reward
Which my lovers gave to me:
And will make her a forest,
And the beast of the field will devour her.

- 15 And I will visit upon her the days of the Baals ;
 To which she burnt incense,
 And (then) put on her ring and her jewels,
 And went after her lovers,
 And forgot me, saith Jehovah.

B. *The Punishment leads to Conversion, and thus to the glorious Renewal of the Marriage Contract between Jehovah and Israel.*

VERSES 16-25.

- 16 Therefore, behold, I am alluring her,
 And will lead her into the wilderness
 And speak unto her heart [speak with comfort].
- 17 And I will give her her vineyards from thence,
 And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope,
 And she will answer then as in the days of her youth,
 As in the day of her coming up from the land of Egypt.
- 18 And it will be in that day, saith the Lord,
 Thou wilt call : My husband,
 And thou wilt no more call me : My Baal.
- 19 And I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth,
 And they shall no more be remembered by their name,
- 20 And I will make for them in that day a covenant
 With the beast of the field,
 And with the birds of heaven,
 And the creeping things of the earth,
 And bow and sword and war will I destroy from the land,
 And make them dwell in security.
- 21 And I will betroth thee to me for ever,
 And betroth thee to me in righteousness and justice,
 And in mercy and in compassion ;
- 22 And betroth thee to me in faithfulness,
 And thou shalt know Jehovah.
- 23 And it will be in that day,
 I will answer, saith the Lord,
 Will answer the heavens,
 And they will answer the earth,
- 24 And the earth will answer the corn and the wine and the oil,
 And they will answer Jezreel [God's sowing]
- 25 And I will sow her for myself in the land,
 And favor "Unfavored,"
 And say to "Not-my-people":
 "Thou art my people,"
 And they shall say : "My God."

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

¹ Ver. 4. — בַּאֲזֵיכֶם, *ân. Acy.* = אֲזֵיכֶם. First regards it as signifying objects of idolatrous worship, therefore : little images, which are represented as being carried upon the breast. [But this is opposed to the parallel expression, זִנְיָיִם, which, as Hengstenberg says, is evidently to be taken as the species (adultery) of which the other (whoredoms, acts of unchastity) is the genus. As illustrating the fitness of this picture, Manger compares Ez. xxiii. 3, and Horace, *Od.*, i., 19, 7, 8. — M.]

[² Ver. 8. — הָיָה לָהּ חֵטֶא, *J. H. Michaelis* and *Jahn* point in their editions הָיָה לָהּ, *her wall*, and this reading, Hengstenberg assumes, without any discussion, to be correct. But there is an obvious unsuitableness in this. The wall could not be represented as being "her" wall unless it were conceived of as existing before the action on the part of Jehovah, which action was to make the wall. — M.]

[8 Ver. 11. — לְכַסּוֹת, (which were) to cover. Such an ellipsis is quite common. The rendering of the LXX. *roû μὴ καλύπτειν*, conveys the sense, but is not a translation. It was quite unnecessary for Newcome, Horsley, Boothroyd, and others following Houbigant, who was misled by the LXX., to change the לְ into כִּי.—M.]

4 Ver. 14. — הִנֵּה. This is usually derived from הִנֵּה, as also is the usual synonym, הִנֵּה. Hengstenberg labors to prove the derivation of both words from הִנֵּה and its 1st fut. : a "I-will-give-thee," similar to our "forget-me-not." The absence of daghesh-forfe in both nouns would seem to prove the untenableness of this hypothesis.—M.]

5 Ver. 17. — עָנָה. Some take this from עָנָה, to be bowed down, here: to be humble. But this does not suit the sense of the verse. Besides, עָנָה would then = שָׁמַע.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

This chapter is the essential supplement to chap. i. It contains, in a more discursive style, an exposition, justifying and elucidating that which in chap. i. was presented only as a theme, and in some parts even enigmatically in its brief sentences. The complaint and threatening of destroying judgments were uttered without any preparation; and still more suddenly were they followed immediately by as glorious an announcement of salvation. Chap. i. must thus excite inquiries, not so much through the symbolical representation of the first part, as by these unexpected utterances, inquiries which demand an answer. Such answer is given by the Lord Himself in chap. ii. 4 ff., in a longer discourse. This is now altogether based upon the conception of Israel as an unchaste wife, which was only indicated in chap. i. and then disappeared, and is developed in two sections, of threatening and of promise. A complaint is first raised against the unchaste wife, and then the course of punishment is figuratively described, which, however, is seen to be really a chastening with the view to conversion from idolatry. This conversion itself is promised, and the way thus prepared for the announcement of salvation. Israel, returning as penitently as a wife to her husband, finds mercy with God. So the close, ver. 24 f., returns expressly to chap. i.—ii. 3, and the discourse is thus shown to be most closely connected with that section.

The complaint and announcement of punishment occupy vers. 4-15. The discourse takes a turn with ver. 16. The declaration of deliverance is introduced by the announcement of conversion, and from ver. 20 onwards becomes a glorious promise.

A. Vers. 4-15. *Complaint, and Announcement of Punishment.*

Vers. 4-6. *Plead with your mother*—for they are children of whoredom. The person who makes the demand is naturally Jehovah. Those who are addressed are not the children of the Prophet, chap. i. 4 ff. (Kurtz), but the children of the adulterous spouse, Israel (and therefore those who are designated children of whoredom, chap. i. 2). These children are distinguished ideally from their mother, because Israel is from one point of view regarded as the spouse. Israel viewed as a unit is the mother: the children then represent the individual Israelites (the mother can not be conceived as existing without the children). The children are now to plead with their mother. But this does not mean that a part of Israel did not serve idols, so that the better disposed among her people would be addressed (Keil, *et al.*). This would conflict with what has been said of the relation between the mother and the children. The children are conceived of as those who have to tread misfortune on account of the prevailing

"whoredom." They, in fact, however, represent just what the mother does; they are to suffer the same punishment with her, though in ver. 6 the punishment is as yet only mentioned expressly as that about to fall upon the children. But the distinction made between the mother and the children is only a rhetorical mode of presentation resorted to for the purpose of casting upon the mother, through the children, the reproach that she by her conduct was bringing misfortune upon them, and thus persuading her to abandon her lewdness. Not as though the children had acted differently from the mother, but now when the punishment is to be presented, the complaint is naturally directed against the latter. For if the children have sinned, they have followed their mother in doing so. She is the really guilty one in this punishment. The children are comparatively innocent, and have been only seduced, and yet they must suffer like their mother! And then they must participate in the sufferings which the mother endures for her own sins. They are therefore the ones who should be represented as pleading with the mother. This mode of representation is not pursued beyond the beginning of the chapter. For she is not my wife, expresses well the sin of the mother. It is as though Jehovah had said: "It is her sin that she deports herself as one who could not be my wife, and whose husband I could not be, and I cannot look upon myself any more as her husband." The next member of the verse shows the cause of this feeling, for it is the conduct of the mother that gives occasion to the children to upbraid her. The punishment would be: I know her no longer as my wife, and will be her husband no longer. But punishment is not introduced before ver. 5 — הִנֵּה.

The הִנֵּה involves the demand to cease from the present conduct. This conduct is "whoredom," but in the case of a wife it is also more, it is "adultery." From her face—from between her breasts. The whoredom (idolatry) of Israel is thus not secret, but is done openly. Israel is like a public barefaced whore, who displays her profession in her face and (bared) breasts.

Ver. 5. The demand is supported by calling attention to the punishment. *Lest I strip her naked.* This is perhaps connected with the foregoing so as to = as a punishment for the shameless exposure of her person which she wantonly practices, strip her bare in a way she does not like and of which she would be ashamed. Divested of the figure the expression would mean: lest I take from her everything that I have given her and reduce her to the condition in which she was before I delivered her and made her what she now is (comp. Ezek. xvi. 4 ff.). The prophet now turns to this earlier condition with the words: as in the day of her birth. Primarily this is an image of nakedness = like a new-born child, but not sim

ply = without clothing, but = divested of everything, stripped of all she can call her own. Thus was Israel on the day of its birth. This birth took place when Israel was chosen to be the people of God. According to chap. xi. 1, this was done in Egypt. Israel was there naked, for it dwelt as an oppressed nation of slaves without a country. **And make her like a wilderness**, that is, reduce her to a situation where the necessities of life are wanting as they are to those in a desert, so that they die of hunger; and like a parched land, that is, a place in which there is no water, so that she may "die of thirst." This dying of thirst is only mentioned because her situation is compared to a desert; and the general sense is = reduce her to a situation of utter destitution from a condition of great abundance. A reference to Israel's sojourn in the desert cannot be well disproved (as by Keil) along with the mention of the day of her birth. Israel, it is true, was supplied with food and water by God. But the desert itself had neither food nor drink, as Israel felt only too keenly. And that desert is an image of the condition to which Israel is to be reduced by God.

Ver. 6. And will not have compassion upon her children. This verse is in sense still dependent upon **כִּנִּי** of ver. 5. The want of compassion is a consequence of the conduct of the mother, but may be turned away by conversion. Even the children shall share the same lot, that is, all individually; none are to suppose that they shall escape punishment, — **for they are children of whoredom.** Because they are begotten of whoredom and also witnesses of it, the Lord who is to punish his adulterous sponse cannot endure them. Still the question of chap. i. 2 repeats itself here, whether **כִּנִּי זָרָה** are not rather: children who commit whoredom. This is most natural, for the children are in fact identical with the mother.

Vers. 7-9. Because their mother hath practiced whoredom — it was better with me than than now. The last explanation given of **כִּנִּי זָרָה** would certainly be incorrect if ver. 7 were an explanation of ver. 6 *b* = They are children of whoredom, for their mother, etc. But such an explanation, continued too in the parallelism (ver. 7 *a*, and *b*), would make the sense extremely prolix. The same remark would apply if the verse were coordinate to ver. 6 *b*, and supported it along with ver. 6 *a*. Besides, this expression concerning the mother's sin would not be appropriate as justifying the punishment threatened against the children. The solution is to be found in the wider scope of ver. 7. For here the thought is so enlarged that it cannot be regarded simply as an explanation of ver. 6, and at the same time coordinate to the second member of that verse. Such a view supposes that if that verse is an explanation, ver. 7 must be so also. The thought is, however, evidently an independent one. Nor does it refer backwards, but, as its contents show, it reaches forward and is therefore rather to be connected with vers. 8, 9. (So Meier; even the Vulgate and Luther have detached it from ver. 6.) [So also Henderson, and Cowles in his exposition though not in his translation. — M.] — **הִזְכִּירְשָׁה** here not = to become a disgrace, but = to commit shame. Luther: conduct herself shamefully. — **Who gave my bread**, etc. = food, clothing, and the enjoyments of life (Keil), comp. Jer. xlv. 17 ff. We may refer this to a condition of things which

actually prevailed in Israel (comp. also ver. 16) If it did exist along with idolatry, it would be naturally suggested that it was due to the idols. In the figurative representation it is the reward which the adulteress received from her paramours (comp. ver. 14). [Keil: "This delusive idea entertained by the wife arose from the sight of the heathen nations round about, who were rich and mighty, and attributed this to their gods." — M.]

Ver. 8. Therefore behold, I hedge up her way with thorns. The hedging up of the way, strengthened in the parallel member by the figure of raising up a wall, means in general to place an obstacle in the way, to set up a wall of separation, and that evidently between the wife and the paramours, Israel and the idols, so that the alliance between them will be dissolved. This is shown further by the words: and she will not find the path to them, and also in ver. 9. This *causa dirimens* is here intentionally referred to only in a general way, in a sort of enigmatical allusion. The "that" is expressed only once with its immediate sequence in ver. 9. The "how" does not appear till ver. 11 ff. It is already hinted at in the conclusion of ver. 9. It is the feeling of distress in strong contrast to the situation just extolled so highly as the gift of the idols. This privation must itself excite doubts as to the power of the idols, and still more must their impotence in the midst of her distress. Israel would indeed become at first more ardent in its worship of idols; to "pursue" after them, etc., the more their prosperity was regarded as their gift, the more would they be missed. But "she will not reach them and will not find them." It is represented, as though outwardly it were no longer possible to hold intercourse with the idols. This mode of representation, however, is connected only with the image of raising a hedge, etc., something which effects an external separation. But the expression is very suitable, especially as the idols denoted by the paramours, prove themselves to be a mere phantom, dead nothings, just when men turn to them for help. They are therefore really not found. Such experience of the nothingness of idols then awakens again a longing after Jehovah as the One, in whom alone help is to be found, a longing after the good bestowed by Him upon his people. The discourse here is just ready to pass over into the thought that this punishment is a chastening to lead to conversion (vers. 16 ff.), but upon the mention of former prosperity, it turns again to complaint, in order to complete the announcement of the punishment merited by the ungrateful forgetfulness of the giver of such prosperity. This is continued till ver. 15. [Hengstenberg: "There can be no doubt, that by the hedging and walling about, severe sufferings are intended, by which the people are encompassed, straitened, and hindered in every free movement. For sufferings appear constantly as the specific against Israel's apostasy from God. . . . We can by no means think of an external obstacle. Outwardly there was, during the exile, and in the midst of idolatrous nations, a stronger temptation to idolatry than they had in their native land. Hence we can think of an internal obstacle only, and then again, only of an absolute incapacity of the idols to grant to the people consolation and relief in their sufferings. If this incapacity is first ascertained by experience, men lose their confidence in them, and seek help where alone it is to be found." — M.]

Vers. 10-12. She knew not, etc. The refer

once is to ver. 7. Israel had shamefully ascribed to the idols what they owed to God. That God was the Giver they must have been inwardly conscious, in fact could have known it from the Law; but they ignored this truth, denied it, and naturally so, because they had departed from their God. The abundance of the natural productions of the country then led to an abundance of silver and gold, but—cutting reproach—that which they owed to God *לַעֲשֹׂה לְבַעַל*, probably; they employed it for Baal, not: they made it a Baal, as the article especially shows. “Employed,” partly in making idol images, partly in the service of idols. *Baal* may be taken here for idols generally, since the actual Baal-worship was done away with by Jehu, though not entirely, comp. 2 Kings xiii. 6 (Keil).

Ver. 11. Now the punishment is expressed which was in vers. 8, 9, only hinted at, the withdrawal of the good things which had been so enjoyed. My corn = the corn which they received from me. In its time, that is, the season when corn and wine are expected. Hence the absence of them was the more distressing, but also more significant and striking, showing itself to be a punishment from God. Since He was not acknowledged as the Giver when He gave them, He will manifest Himself more clearly as such in taking them away. Which was to cover her nakedness. The resulting want should be complete, its consequence ignominious bareness = utter destitution. And then will I uncover her shame. = her lovers (idols) shall also look upon her nakedness to her disgrace. She would become so miserable, that even they shall despise her, though she once held herself so highly with them.

Vers 13-15. And I will bring to an end all her joy, etc. A still more definite indication of the punishment before threatened. All joy must cease. But joy culminates, and has its purest expression in the festivals, the yearly feasts, strictly speaking. *וְכָל*. Upon these follows the monthly feast, that of the new moon, and the weekly one, that of the Sabbath. *כָּל־טִיבוֹתָהָ* then gathers all these up in one general expression. Even during the prevalence of idolatry the feast-days probably remained outwardly the same as before.

Ver. 14. The devastation mentioned here is probably intended to follow up the cessation of joy; for the vine and the fig tree are the finest productions of Canaan, not necessary to the support of life, but affording the choicest delicacies (comp. Joel i. 7-12). [Henderson: “These nouns are to be taken as collectives, or rather, as Horsley suggests, as plantations of vines and fig trees. These should be left uncultivated on the removal of the inhabitants to a foreign region, comp. Is. v. 6; yii. 23, 24. — M.]

Ver. 15. And will visit upon her the days of Baal, that is, the feast-days just mentioned, for they were celebrated in honor of Baal, and not of Jehovah. And put on her ring, etc. This is an expression which in its strictness belongs only to the image; for Israel is compared to a coquettish prostitute, who is in the habit of thus adorning herself. Yet there may be allusion to the festal attire worn at the idol-feasts. And forgot me. A sharp and mournful contrast to the vain adornments of the prostitute. For the sake of the paramours she was never weary of decking herself out; but no more thought of Jehovah. It is plain how completely this whole threatening was ful-

filled by the Assyrian invasion. Yet it is to be observed that this itself is not threatened here, and still less banishment. In general, no enemy is yet named, at least none definitely, but only the laying waste of the land. [Henderson: “Their entirely abandoning themselves to the service of idols, and their dereliction from the God of their fathers, are brought forward at the conclusion of this description of their conduct, in order to heighten the aggravation of their guilt, and render the announcement of the kindly disposition of Jehovah toward them, at the beginning of the following verse, the more surprising.” — M.]

B. Announcement of the Conversion of Israel and the beneficent Renewal of the Covenant.

Vers. 16-19. Therefore behold I will allure her, etc. *לִבְּנִי*. We have had this word twice already in a similar construction (vers. 8 and 11) with the sense: because Israel has transgressed, therefore God will punish them. *לִבְּנִי* also here naturally means: therefore. Every other explanation, such as *varuntamen*, or *profecto*, is arbitrary, and has arisen from the embarrassment occasioned by the difficulty which a “therefore” causes in this connection; for it is not clear from what a conclusion is drawn, whether from their sin or from their punishment or from their sudden desire to return (ver. 9). Nor is it clear what conclusion is drawn, whether punishment or a display of love. As regards the first question it is to be observed that the mention of Israel's sin immediately precedes (ver. 15 at the end), while their punishment had been previously described, whose converting influence ver. 9 had already indicated. The expression: I will allure her, might certainly form a contrast to the words: she forgot me = while she forgets me, I am mindful of her and recall her to my thoughts. But the whole can hardly be merely an inference from what is said at the close of ver. 15, for the reference to the sin is there only incidental and subordinate to the description of the punishment. *לִבְּנִי* therefore draws an inference not from Israel's sin in itself, but from that sin as being punished, and punished not without severity, as was before plainly stated. Hence we find that *לִבְּנִי* introduces a conclusion drawn from the contents of the whole preceding section = therefore because Israel has been punished for her sin and forgetfulness of me, and has been so reduced to a condition of distress that she longs after happiness in communion with me, I will allure her, etc. This reference to the whole of the preceding is certainly justified in our verse, since the discourse evidently takes here a new direction. If this is the sense of *לִבְּנִי*, the conclusion which is drawn is not an announcement of punishment, against which the expression, “I will allure her” is decisive, but an exhibition of love, and yet such a display as is virtually determined by the sin that is punished, and which is connected immediately with the punishment, in order to foster those first motions of longing into a steadfast resolution to return. [Pocock, Newcome, Noyes, and Henderson translate: nevertheless, notwithstanding. They failed to discern the inner connection between the passages divided by this particle, which, in fact, never has the meaning they assign to it. Cowles reaches the right conclusion, though not upon exegetical grounds: “Some have found a difficulty here, inasmuch as the grievous sins of Israel seem to be no natural reason for giving the blessings hereafter promised. But the reasons.

viewed fundamentally, lie deeper than the sins of Israel, even in God's covenant love and faithfulness. He cannot bear that his own Israel should sink hopelessly under her sins into ruin. Therefore his pity moves Him to discipline and to mercy." So also Pusey with most of the German Expositors. — M.] And lead her into the desert: not as a punishment, for the allusion is to the leading of the children of Israel into the desert by Moses (comp. ver. 17). But this was really a deliverance, namely, from the afflictions of Egypt. At first it is such only negatively, implying that they will no longer continue in such distress. They are not yet in Canaan. Even the desert brought want and destitution with it: and this is brought first into view here. In so far the situation indicated by the leading into the desert coincides actually and outwardly with the punishment by affliction and calamity pictured in ver. 11 (the "wilderness" is the realization of that which is threatened in vers. 11 ff.). But this situation is presented here also under another point of view, namely (as being compared with the wanderers in the desert under Moses), that of a situation while surrounded with affliction yet leading in truth to deliverance, and the idea of punishment is thereby converted into that of chastisement. For the destitution felt in the desert meant here had its definite disciplinary aim, — to shut up the people to the discovery of their need of help, and to lead them to faith in God through the help and gracious guidance which they then experienced. Thus they in the desert, even though encompassed with need, were still upon the way to Canaan, the land of blessings, and salvation. This is made plain from what follows: And speak to her heart = comfort her (comp. e. g. Gen. xxxiv. 3; 1. 21; Is. xl. 2). These words imply an inward consolation by manifestations of love which immediately follow — the blessings that were withdrawn are again supplied.

Ver. 17. And I will give her her vineyards from thence = from the desert, so that they, as soon as they shall have passed the limits of Canaan, shall receive them, that is, the vineyards which Israel once possessed but had lost (ver. 14), therefore: her vineyards. What happened once is a type of that which shall happen again. And the Valley of Achor for a door of hope. The Valley of Achor here comes into view: (1) on account of its appellative signification: valley of trouble, affliction (Is. vii. 25). This shall be made a gate of hope (a valley = a natural gate): therefore a transformation of mourning into joy; (2) but also on account of its position near the border of Canaan. For Israel is conceived of as marching out of the desert into Canaan. It remains a question whether the occasion of the name is also to be taken into account. In this valley the anger of God was appeased by the stoning of Achan, and was removed from Israel to give place to renewed favor. Through that which then happened to Achan, this valley became a door of hope to Israel, which lay exposed to the anger of God. And this again sets forth the thought that punishment, affliction, shall become to them the way to renewed favor. The conception is more profound than if it merely set forth a change from one situation to another. But the image and the thing represented are not exact counterparts. Here Israel is the party who is punished and is again to find favor. But there Israel finds favor through the punishment of a single individual. [Hengstenberg: "The people when they entered into Canaan were immediately deprived of

the favor of God by the transgression of an individual — Achan, — which was only a single fruit from the tree of the sin which was common to all. But God himself in his mercy made known the means by which his lost favor might be regained; and thus the place which seemed to be the door of destruction became the door of hope. . . . This particular dealing of God, however, is based upon his nature, and must therefore repeat itself when Israel again comes into similar circumstances." — M.]

And she shall shout aloud thither. The Lord comes to meet Israel (comp. ver. 16: shall comfort her); and Israel cries out towards the place whence he comes forth, looking back to the **מִצְפֵּה**. The meaning is, that with thankful acknowledgments she accepts these tokens of his love; not only receives them but answers to them by suitable conduct. Others suppose that **מִצְפֵּה** means here: to be afflicted, or to be humbled. But such a sense is unsuitable in this verse. Besides, **מִצְפֵּה** would be

equal to simple **שָׁם**. [The view given above as to the meaning of this clause, and adopted by most of the German expositors, is defended at length by Hengstenberg, and is probably the correct one. All the English expositors, on the other hand, follow the old explanation which translates the verb: to sing, and see a special allusion to the song of Miriam and the Israelites after the crossing of the Red Sea. The chief arguments in favor of the former view are, (1.) The greater fitness of the idea of "answering," as exhibiting a change of character in the Israelites and their readiness to turn to God. Singing would merely indicate that their distress was removed, which was not the ultimate object of God's dealing with them. (2.) The meaning, "answering," is the leading usage of the *Kal*; that of singing is proper to the *Piel*. (3.)

שָׁמָּה ought to be rendered "thither," which suits the idea of answering, especially as explained above, but not that of singing. — M.] As on the day, etc. Perhaps there is an allusion here to the song of Moses (Ex. xv.), in which Israel gave a grateful answer to the deliverance which God had wrought for them. **עַכְשָׁה** would then be rendered directly: sing. So the Vulgate and Luther (comp. 1 Sam. xviii. 7; xxi. 11; xxix. 5, to strike up a responsive song). Yet the general signification is probably to be preferred.

Ver. 18 is then attached to this **עַכְשָׁה**. My husband. That is, she will recognize in Jehovah her true spouse, regard Baal no longer as combined with God, thus (by a convenient *escamotage* so natural to the human heart which becomes inwardly apostate from God) to all appearance calling upon Jehovah, but really putting Baal in his place and thus dispossessing Him.

Ver. 19. And I will remove the name of Baal from her mouth = I will so act that thou shalt not take the name of the idols into thy mouth any longer, that is, shalt not honor them (for as long as they are honored they are taken into the mouth, are thought of), but wilt depart from them entirely, have nothing more to do with them. The promise is a literal fulfillment of Ex. xxiii. 13; (comp. also Zech. xiii. 2), and expressed in the same words.

Vers. 20–22. And I will make a covenant for them in that day, etc. A covenant for them, in their interest, so that they shall suffer no injury. Observe here how the figure of the woman as **ad**

dressed is here departed from, only to be returned to in the next verse. The covenant with the wild beasts lays upon them the obligation not to injure mankind, and especially not to lay waste the land. That punishment was threatened for the immediate future (comp. ver. 14). Just for that reason it is now promised to the converted and favored people that they shall be defended from it. [Keil: "The three classes of animals that are dangerous to men are mentioned here, as in Gen. ix. 2. Beasts of the field as distinguished from the domestic animals (*behemoth* are beasts that live in freedom in the fields, either wild beasts, or game that devours or injures the fruits of the field). By the fowls of heaven, we are to understand chiefly the birds of prey. *Remes* does not mean reptiles, but active creatures, the smaller animals of the earth which move about swiftly."—M.] **And I will break bow and sword and war.** To break the weapons of war means to cause war to cease forever. This is expressly intimated in what is attached here by a zeugma. To break war in pieces, — to break bow and sword, and so to put an end to war. The whole is the fulfillment of Lev. xxvi. 3 ff.; comp. Is. ii. 4; xi. 6 ff.; xxxv. 9; Zech. ix. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 25 ff. And not merely will a condition of security and peace be afforded, but also that after which Israel longs (ver. 18) will be given, namely, intercourse with God. Upon this alone is Israel's renewed prosperity based.

And I will betroth thee to me forever. A new marriage-contract is to be signed. Israel now converted, becomes altogether different, is regarded again as an unstained virgin, and is betrothed by God to Himself. What formerly existed, that she was once a faithless spouse, is left quite out of sight. For **נָשָׂא** means: to woo a maiden, to betroth her. The words, "I will betroth her," are thrice repeated, to take all doubt away from the statement. This covenant is now to last forever without any interruption — in righteousness and justice, in mercy and compassion. We are evidently to understand here the righteousness which is displayed in Jehovah's appearing to favor his people and defending their cause against their enemies, from whose power he delivers them. Such righteousness and judgment are, with relation to the enemies, only negative, that is, they are displayed in punishing them; but, with relation to God's people, positive, so that righteousness really bears the sense of salvation, deliverance. In so far Luther is right, when he holds that such righteousness is the imputed righteousness of Christ. For there is certainly presented the notion of God's intervention to bestow favor upon man, and therefore of an act of justification, only not at first as connected with the accusings of conscience by reason of guilt, but in relation to God's punitive judgments against sin. These, so to speak, lose the right to destroy God's people any longer, because they are accepted by Him as converted. Keil explains the words as meaning, the righteous judgment by which God purifies his people, in order to eradicate everything which, on the side of the Church, could do prejudice to the covenant. But the discourse has already passed beyond this. The judgment has been already inflicted, and we are now upon the ground of the complete promises of salvation, when God no more appears against his people, but interferes in their behalf in accordance with the purification which has been effected. The disposition of mind in God represented by this righteousness and judgment is

still further brought out by the two words: in mercy and compassion. Every idea of an intervention of God in his people's behalf upon the ground of their merit is thus excluded. What God exercises towards them is purely favor and compassion.

Ver. 22. But these shall never cease. Hence the addition: **in faithfulness.** Only thus does this engagement receive the pledge of its eternal duration, while by the preceding generally the possibility of its ratification is set forth. Righteousness and judgment, favor and compassion, are the *conditio sine qua non* and *causa efficiens*; faithfulness is the essential *modus* of the engagement. The end then is: **And thou shalt know Jehovah.** No interruption of such relation shall ever intervene between Jehovah and Israel; upon the establishment of such intercourse, a true knowledge of God will be imparted. This naturally does not mean a mere cognition of God, least of all a mere logical conception of Him, — in general, not a mere intellectual relation to Him based upon the operations of the understanding, but a personal living relation, that deeper notion which is certainly sometimes conveyed by **יָדָע**.

Vers. 23-25. **And it will be on that day that I will answer, etc.** The consequence of the covenant newly ratified is the readiness of God to bless his people most richly. The betrothal having been accomplished, the marriage presents are not wanting, and heaven and earth, standing in the service of the bridegroom and husband, must contribute their share. The heavens, etc., in a descending series, are represented as earnestly asking the personified objects above them respectively whether the blessing which they expect is to be dispensed. The heavens ask Jehovah, the earth the heavens, etc., or they look towards them with longing. And now this questioning, this earnest request (in the time of Israel's rejection) is "answered" cordially and assuringly. In how far, however, this original sense of **עֲנָה** is carried out, or whether it does not pass over into the signification of our "agree with" = comply, listen to, cannot be definitely shown. It is, however, in accordance with the largely poetical conception to assume here a strict prosopopœia. The first object of the representation is Jehovah; therefore the sense of the whole naturally is, that Jehovah, upon whom all blessing depends, will confer upon his Church the blessings He had withdrawn from it (comp. Dent. xxviii. 12 and the contrast, Dent. xxviii. 23 f.; Lev. xxvi. 19). [Keil: "By prosopopœia the prophet represents the heavens as praying to God, to allow it to give to the earth that which will insure its fertility, whereupon the heavens fulfill the desires of the earth, and the earth yields its produce to the nation." Umbreit: "It is as though we heard the exalted harmonies of the united powers of creation sending forth their notes as they are sustained and moved by the eternal key-note of the creative and moulding Spirit." Henderson compares the personification in Tibullus, l., Eleg. vii. 25. The extreme beauty of the figure here has often been praised.—M.] **Will answer Jezreel.** The name Jezreel is here used unexpectedly instead of Israel. The same name which symbolized the judgment upon Israel (i. 4) is here employed directly to designate the favored people according to its appellative significance: God will sow, especially as in chap. ii. 2 the hope of victory was connected with Jezreel. Israel appears as the sowing of God, because planted anew by divine grace, as ver. 25 shows immediately. Thus the first name of evil

omen is taken away and converted into its opposite. The same is true of the other two names. Israel will again be called "Favored," and the "People of God," because it is his. It is therefore said, beautifully completing the picture, that the people again know God as their God. Thus God's renewed favor, and the people's new heart, go hand in hand. On the fulfillment of the promise, see the Doctrinal Section, No. 4.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The whole tenor of our chapter presupposes that Jehovah's relation to Israel as his people is compared to a marriage. If we seek the *tertium comparationis* in this comparison, it is manifest upon a general view, that everything of an accidental or external nature is denied of this relation, that it is presented as a union inward, sacred, and indissoluble, involving infeasible rights and obligations. But, more especially, there are two elements entering into the nature of marriage, which form the points of comparison, namely, love, by which the husband is bound to the wife, and its correlative the requirement of fidelity, or of exclusive reciprocal affection, which He makes of her. Hence the relation of Jehovah to his people is compared to a marriage because his love to Israel is as strong and intimate as that of a husband to his wife. As the husband chooses the wife from love, and perhaps, urged by love, takes a poor maiden and raises her to himself, and in his married life attests his affection by being her protector and benefactor who cannot show her too many evidences of his devotion, so is it with Jehovah towards his people (comp. vers. 10, 23, 24). Such love on the part of the husband must have as its correlative on the part of the wife, fidelity, undivided, exclusive affection. As certainly as the husband should expect this fidelity from his wife, so certainly shall Jehovah expect it from Israel; as strongly as the wife is bound to love him to the exclusion of all others, and as she does basely violate this duty by attaching herself to another, the same is true of the relation of Israel, God's people, to Jehovah. But if unfaithfulness on the part of the wife is a violation of duty, it is also worthy of punishment. And if the punishment (rejection) of an unfaithful, adulterous wife is justifiable, so also is the punishment (rejection) of God's faithless people. But this is only a chastisement wrung from love, and the source of deep anguish to the loving husband. Therefore the husband who loves his wife truly, with a love answering to the idea of marriage, while angry at her infidelity and employing the most severe means to punish it, only does so in order if possible to bring her back to her duty and as the only way to continue the alliance. Thus is it with Jehovah towards Israel. As his love has established the covenant with Israel, and displayed itself in it, so does it seek with its whole strength to preserve it unbroken through all interruptions, — in other words, to restore it.

2. The exhibition of God's relation to his people under the figure of a marriage permits us, on the other hand, to draw an inference as to the nature of the marriage itself. Such an exalted and sacred relation could only be thus represented under an exalted view of marriage. The lively, strong, unchangeable love of God to his people, and the demand of an unchangeable fidelity answering to such love, and turning aside to no other object, is the subject of the representation. This

marriage is necessarily conceived of as a relation constituted by such love on the part of the husband and such fidelity on the part of the wife. Without these it is not contracted; where these are wanting or cease to exist, it is shaken to its foundation. The husband cleaves in love to his wife and to none other; true marriage is in its very nature monogamic; the wife must in fidelity belong to this husband and to none other.

How severe is thus the condemnation of all actual adultery, and of all unchastity as the source of adultery, as read in the strong complaints against Israel as the unfaithful wife! What a spirit of moral purity and of chastity is expressed here! We find here already just the view of marriage, and, on the other side, of adultery and whoredom, which meets us in the New Testament, *e. g.*, in the writings of Paul. The prophet knows no better image than that of marriage to set forth the depth and sacredness of Jehovah's relation to Israel, and the Apostle knows no better image than the relation of Christ to his Church to set forth the depth and sacredness of the marriage union.

3. "She knew not that I gave her," etc. This is perpetually repeated. God blesses men with good things — undeservedly, even when they do not serve Him but "idols." But they do not know that it is his hand from which they receive everything. It is just the superabundance of his gifts, that makes them so self-exalted and completely forgetful of Him. God must then change this abundance into want, and make presumptuous men feel their own impotence. And how deeply God can humble men! Such visitations are then the means by which God draws them again to Himself, teaches them to know Him, how unjust and at the same time how foolish is their apostasy from Him, how little their "idols" can help them, rather how ill they reward them; and how good it is, on the other hand, to abide by the service of the true God ("it was better with me than now"). The fruit of such knowledge by humiliation is then the abandonment of idols and a turning to God.

4. That Hosea reverts with special fondness to the ancient history of Israel was already remarked in § 2 of the Introduction, and there shown to be connected with the fundamental idea of his prophetic discourses. In the later chapters (from the ninth onwards) this is specially apparent; but it is also found in our chapter, and thus in the earlier portion of his writings. In this he chiefly takes up the great deeds by which God manifested Himself to the fathers, — the exodus from Egypt, the journey through the Desert, the entrance into the Promised Land. These were the great fundamental acts of God in behalf of Israel, and were most deeply impressed upon the consciousness of the people; for they owed to these their very existence as his people, so that they could never forget them, not even in the season of their greatest decline. Prophetic discourse has in them therefore a sure, unassailable foundation upon which to take its stand. It can point out to the present, in a manner not to be resisted, the dealings of God in his specific relation to Israel his people, can draw from thence its most forcible arguments for its warning and chastening, as well as for its comfort and promises. It has been an advantage which it well understands and knows well how to use.

Special stress is in our chapter laid upon the journey through the desert as upon a season of great significance for Israel. Israel was in the wilderness — the milk and honey of the Promised

Land were not yet; the flesh-pots of Egypt were no more. In the latter respect this season was one of deprivation and of want, and apparently of loss. But this was only apparent; for in reality it was not only a deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, which had both outwardly and inwardly injured the people, but God could draw so much nearer to the people spiritually as they were now reduced to corporeal distress, and attest and reveal Himself to them by his helpful and blessed mercy. It was just here that God concluded his covenant with Israel and made them his people, so that their real gain outweighed their apparent loss; and the people to whom God betrothed Himself was or became the people which found itself upon the way to the Promised Land. So the Prophet sees in the profound and fruitful significance of this journey, or rather of this leading through the Desert, a type of the blessing which a removal into the desert as a chastening would convey to the people who had become unfaithful to their God. They are deprived of their possessions, but so only stripped of the prosperity which had made them forgetful of God, and which was therefore an evil. And now when they have these no longer, and are thus freed from the fetters which have bound them spiritually, when, by foreign influences, so to speak, they are brought face to face with God, He has again free access to them; the time has come when God can again betroth Himself to the people who again return to Him, lead them again into the Promised Land, and restore them to a state of renewed prosperity and of richest blessing.

Those then who were led forth into the Desert did not realize the object of that experience. Nor was it individuals whom it was to profit, but the people as such. For them the journey through the wilderness was a season of trial in which they were being prepared to become God's people, who should take possession of the Promised Land. And so in the sense of the prophetic promise the individuals who should suffer the judgment of devastation were not the same as those for whom the day of the new salvation was to break forth. That was to be a new generation. But the people were still the same, in the sense to be stated more clearly immediately.

5. With regard to the promise of our chapter and its fulfillment, the remark made in chap. i. applies, namely, (a.) The fulfillment is not to be seen in the return of the Jews from the exile. This was, to be sure, a fulfillment, but only a small and feeble beginning. For the promise is to be regarded as essentially Messianic. And therefore we Christians, if to us the truth is fully and differently realized that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, must hold that this promise has found its fulfillment in Christ, and still finds it in Him; that is, in Christ the new "betrothal" of God to his people has already taken place; but the great salvation which is involved in this is as yet only partially realized, the completion is yet to come. The people of God are still marching through the desert; in Christ we are upon the sure way to the Promised Land, but that goal is not yet reached. (b.) Israel, to whom salvation is here promised by the Prophet, comes into view, not according to its natural nationality, but according to its divine destiny, or according to its typical significance as the *People of God*. They cannot perish beneath any judgment: for them a new day of salvation is waiting. But as this salvation is conditioned upon the coming of the Messiah, and we know clearly that the Messianic salvation is and shall be universal,

so we are forbidden to restrict this great promised day of salvation to the external Israel, although the Prophet undeniably speaks of it, — Israel and God's people being as yet to him essentially one, — and must extend it to the people of God generally, therefore to all believers, believers of Israel together with those of the Gentiles incorporated into the ancient Church, which must ever remain the parent stem. To Israel, who had become "Not-my-people," many of the heathen who had been "Not-my-people" will unite themselves, and to them, to this whole complex "Not-my-people," will God say: "Thou art my people:" and they will say: "My God." So clearly and truly has Paul shown that the Gentiles must first become what Israel was, and that they shall and will really become so, that they shall actually overshadow Israel and so repair what they had lost. If these promises have not found and still do not find their fulfillment in the literal interpretation of what is said of Israel, it is clear that it is not a literal fulfillment of their contents, which speak of temporal blessings in the Holy Land, that is to be expected. Such limited blessings are inseparably connected with the limited range of application; but if the latter, the restriction to Israel, is only the shell and not the kernel, so is it with the former.

When the people of God were embodied in a nation, under the Old Testament, the possession of a definite country as the inheritance assigned them by God was something essential, and therefore, as the desolation of the country was a token of the Divine anger, so its fruitfulness, or in general a state of temporal prosperity, was necessarily an indication of the Divine favor. And so the temporal blessings predicted by the Prophet are the tokens of acceptance, of the returning favor of God. The latter, however, the return of favor, is the main element, the kernel which remains after the husk is stripped off. Yet the favor of God manifests itself still under the New Covenant in temporal blessings, while his wrath is declared in temporal punishments. But it does not need to be shown that the complete abandonment of the notion of a national and local settlement in a definite country, as belonging to the conception of a people of God, went further than this; that the New Covenant opens up a prospect of spiritual and inward blessings and enjoyments of which the former were only a thin shadow; and, in spite of this, to insist upon the literal sense is to beat in the face of the New Covenant, and to deny to the prophetic promises generally their lasting significance. For the legitimate consequence of such a theory is to declare that these are not and never shall be fulfilled; it is not simply to dream of a fulfillment expected still in the millennium, and to transfer to this epoch, which is not described any more definitely in the Apocalypse, conditions for which it is felt that room can be found nowhere else.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

God's testimony against this apostate people: (1) threatening them with severe judgment; (2) and yet alluring them back with glorious promises. — The judgments of God, (1) invoked only by faithless apostasy from Him and base disowning of his favor; (2) aiming only at the complete conversion of the apostate and the joyful acceptance of the converted.

Ver. 4. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Believers are bound to warn in love their brothers, sisters, or

parents, who are remiss in the practice of true religion, and to bring them to the right way.

Ver. 7. God is the real Giver of all temporal and spiritual blessings. If, therefore, thou hast any want, seek its supply from God.

LANGRISH: It is much more easy and pleasant for a true child of God to serve Him in the enjoyment of his favor and with inward peace, than it is for an untaught child of the world to cleave to it with its restless service of sin.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Crosses and obstacles in an even course are great blessings, and are so to be accounted; they are God's hedges to keep us from transgressing, to restrain us from wandering out of the green pastures, to "withdraw man from his purpose" (Job xxxiii. 17), to make the way of sin difficult that we may not go on in it, and to keep us from it whether we will or not. We have reason to bless God for restraining grace and for restraining judgment. God is a bountiful benefactor even to those whom He foresees will be ungrateful and unthankful to Him. — M.]

Ver. 10. God ever remains the Possessor of the gifts He bestows. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: It is a shameful and inexcusable sin to misuse the gifts of God, in order to serve our evil desires or to promote evil ends. It is a great sin to devote the riches, which God bestows, to the service of idolatry or superstition.

[PUSEY: Since "men have as many strange gods as they have sins," what do they who seek pleasure or gain greatness or praise in forbidden ways or from forbidden sources, than make their pleasure or gain or ambition their god, and offer their time and understanding and ingenuity and intellect, yea their whole lives and their whole selves, their souls and bodies, all the gifts of God, in sacrifice to the idols they have made? — M.]

Ver. 11. PFAFF. *BIBELWERK*: God takes his gifts from us when we misuse them. He demands a heavy reckoning.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those that abuse the mercies God gives them to his dishonor cannot expect to enjoy them long. — M.]

Ver. 12. HENGSTENBERG: Him who forsakes God for the world, God puts to shame before the world, and that all the more, the nearer he formerly stood to Him.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those who will not deliver themselves into the hand of God's mercy cannot be delivered out of the hand of his justice. — M.]

Ver. 14. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Thus on account of false worship of God and impious doctrine, are whole countries destroyed by the Lord. O, that true zeal would animate the great ones of this world to destroy the kingdom of Satan everywhere powerfully, so that the hand of the Lord may not smite them.

[HENGSTENBERG: The sacred writers are not ashamed to use a base word for such base traffic. They speak throughout of common things in a common manner; for the vulgar word is the most suitable for a vulgar thing. The morality of a people or of an age may be measured by their speaking of a vulgar thing in a vulgar manner, or the reverse. — M.]

Ver. 15. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: This is the way of the gracious and merciful God: if He does first lead us into the desert and make us feel the rod of his wrath, He speaks kindly to us afterwards when we repent, and applies his mercy to our stricken hearts, which are thus made more capable of using it aright.

[MATTHEW HENRY: The best way of reducing wandering souls to God is by fair means. By the promise of rest in Christ we are invited to take his yoke upon us, and the work of conversion may be forwarded by comforts as well as by convictions.

PUSEY: God has mercy, not because we deserve it, but because we need it. He draws us because we are so deeply sunken. He prepares the soul by these harder means, and thus the depths of her misery cry to the depths of his compassion: and because chastisement alone would stupefy her, not melt her, He changes his wrath into mercy, and speaks to the heart which, for her salvation, He has broken. — M.]

Ver. 17. Strife and tribulation are to believers by God's grace a door of hope (Rom. v. 4). It is a peculiar and special work for God's children to praise Him with mouth, heart, and life, for so many blessings received.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Behold, O soul, the consequence of thy true repentance. Thou hast new hope, new joy, new faith in Jesus the Bridegroom of our souls, the abandonment of all false and hypocritical worship, new blessings from God, security, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

[PUSEY: To each returning soul, the valley of trouble, or the lowliness of repentance, becometh a door of patient longing, not in itself but because God giveth it so; a longing which reacheth on, awaiteth on, entering within the vail, and bound fast to the throne of God. — M.]

Ver. 19. KEIL: The abandonment of idolatry and mixed religion is a work of divine grace which renews the heart and fills it with abhorrence of idolatry in its gross or refined forms.

Ver. 20. Only then can men live with full enjoyment and security in the world, when they feel assured that they have a merciful God.

[MATTHEW HENRY: *Tranquillus Deus tranquillat omnia.* — M.]

Ver. 21. RIEGER: When the kind alluring of God finds entrance into us, when it educes an answer of humble penitence, how the faithful God becomes inclined to make all his covenant good to us, and to let no good thing fail of all that He has spoken.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: How highly are the souls of believers esteemed by God that He should betroth Himself to them, and that to eternity, and present Himself and his love to them literally as their own! For in this He presents to them his dear righteousness, the righteousness of Christ, which is of infinite worth; He acquits them in judgment; He displays toward them mercy and compassion by the forgiveness of sins. He even betroths Himself to them in faithfulness, and thus implants the true knowledge of Him in their souls. Prove, O soul, whether thou art as intimate with Him: Dost thou enjoy with Him a blessed and true communion of love? Why is it then that thou dost still love so much the world and sin, and that thy mind is ever occupied with other objects than Jesus?

[SAINT BERNARD: How can it be that so mighty a king should become a Bridegroom, that the Church should be exalted into a bride? That alone which is all-powerful hath power for this, Love that is strong as death. How should that not raise her up, which has already made Him to stoop? If He hath not acted as a spouse, if He hath not loved as a spouse, been jealous as a spouse, then hesitate thou to think thyself espoused. — M.]

Vers. 23, 24. If God be for us, who can be against us. Faith will assuredly gain a hearing. Behold, all creatures are ready to serve believers. Everything must drop blessings upon them.

PEAFF. *Bibelwerk*: God pours down upon believers from the lofty heaven of his mercy a shower of spiritual gifts, yes, even the oil of the Holy Spirit Himself. It is our part to open the mouths of our heart, and most eagerly receive those blessings which God's mercy vouchsafes to us.

[MATTHEW HENRY: See what a peculiar delight those that are in covenant with God may take in their creature comforts, as seeing them all come to them from the hand of God; they can run up all the streams to the fountain, and taste covenant love in common mercies, which makes them doubly sweet. — M.]

Ver. 25. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: There is thus always time left for repentance, and the Lord still preserves a seed for Himself, which He makes fruitful and increases. If He then is so rich in mercy, O let us become ready to receive it by a

true repentance and conversion, and not suppose that this great work can be accomplished in a life less spirit or with a hypocritical behavior.

CRAMER: True faith knows God not only as God, but as its God.

RIEGER: All in this life that is truly good is included in this: My God! if said not from habit, but with a full title to its use. This is a word of faith, by which we place our whole reliance upon the almighty, true, and compassionate God; it is a word of hope by which we provide ourselves with all good perpetually in God, who is a Rock of Eternity, a word of love and fellowship by which we delight ourselves in the goodness of God, and give ourselves wholly up to Him.

[PUSEY: To say *my God*, is to own an exclusive relation to God alone. It is to say, my Beginning and my End, my Hope and my Salvation, in whom alone I will hope, whom alone I will fear, love, worship, trust in, and obey, and serve, with all my heart, soul, strength, and mind, my God and my All! — M.]

CHAPTER III.

The Love which Jehovah preserves towards the "Adulterous" People, and the Chastening in Love which He undertakes for their Conversion, again symbolically represented.

- 1 THEN said the Lord [And Jehovah said] unto me, Go yet,¹ love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the Lord [Jehovah] toward the children of Israel, who look [and they turn] to other gods, and love flagons of
2 wine² [raisin-cakes]. So I bought her³ to me for a homer of barley and a half-homer
3 of barley. And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide [remain quiet] for me many
4 days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will
4 I also be for thee. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king,
and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without
5 an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return and
seek the Lord [Jehovah] their God, and David their king, and shall fear⁴ the Lord
and his goodness in the latter days [shall tremble towards Jehovah and towards his goodness at the
end of the days].

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — עֵוֶר might, especially to gain a relation to יְהוָה (i. 2), be connected with יִשְׁמָר. But there is no sufficient ground for a change in the accentuation. The reference to chap. i. 2 is clear by the connection with יְהוָה.

[2 Ver. 1. — The translation of the last two words of ver. 1, in E. V.: "flagons of wine," which is that of Junius, Tremellius, and others, and the various other renderings, have not been due to different readings, but to misconceptions of the meaning of יִשְׁמָר. The only variation of reading seems to have been that held by Aquila, who translates: ραλατά, having read יִשְׁמָר. — M.]

[3 Ver. 2. — יָבִיחַ has here daghesh-forte separative. See Green, *Gr.*, § 24 b; Ewald, § 90 c (b); Böttcher, § 229, 3; 399 b (1). Note the repetition of יָבִיחַ as characteristic of the Hebrew. It might be better to avoid the like construction in English, as many have done, by rendering: a homer-and-a-half of barley. See the exposition. — M.]

4 Ver. 5 — וְיָבִיחַ is a pregnant construction: tremble (and come) toward Jehovah and toward his goodness

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Chapter iii. narrates a second symbolical action, in which the prophet has again to represent by his elations to a woman the relation of God to Israel.

But as regards this relation, that which is to be presented to the senses is essentially different from that which the symbolical action of chap. i. was to present. There the sin of Israel was to be symbolized, with the judgment which Jehovah would inflict upon Israel for their idolatry. Here there is

no distinct reference to these. It might be assumed of itself that a simple repetition of the comparison would be inadmissible. We must rather expect an advance. This is found when we consider that we are no longer at the beginning as in chap. i., out that the whole exposition, from chap. ii. 1 onwards, lies between, and especially the section ii. 4 ff., where it is clearly stated that Israel will be deservedly punished, but only because of God's love in order that they may by chastisement be led to return and secure his favor. This announcement is presupposed in our chapter, which naturally stands in close relation to chap. i. But as the latter chapter forms a beginning, so also does it form a conclusion. For here we have not to do with the judgment, as such, which Israel has to suffer, the judgment of rejection, but with the symbolical declaration, that God loves Israel, must chasten them, but does so only out of love, only because He will not cast them off. The symbolizing of this love of God is shown expressly in ver. 1, to be the main object of this purely symbolical transaction, and the emphasis is therefore placed upon the command, to "love," laid upon the prophet, which is inserted designedly. The sequel shows of what kind this love is, and what is its aim. Vers. 1-3 describe the symbolical action. Vers. 4, 5 afford its explanation and inform us of its object.

Ver. 1. And Jehovah said to me: go once more, etc. The reference to chap. i. 2 is clear even by the collocation of **לֵךְ** and **אֶהְיֶה** is essential, as already hinted, and therefore cannot be modified into a mere **קח** (i. 2) [=take], on account of the **לֵךְ**, which expresses the repetition of the former action. It is only the **לֵךְ** that needs to be repeated, in relation to the woman. But what the prophet is to do this time in respect to the woman is **אֶהְיֶה**. This must express not merely a *disposition* to love (for a command, and especially the command **לֵךְ**, would not agree with this, expressing as it does an outward act), but an attestation or effectuation of love. Yet this presupposes an inclination to love; in so far it is demanded of the prophet. For he is to represent the conduct of God, and in that his displays of love spring from a loving mind. The prophet is to love a woman who is not in the least worthy of love—to love whom one feels and can feel no desire.

אִשָּׁה אֶהְיֶה רָע וּמִנְאָפֶת. Looking to the second epithet the sense is clear: committing adultery. Thus the prophet must marry an adulterous woman. This can scarcely be a woman who has been unfaithful to her marriage with another. It might be supposed, indeed, that she had been separated from her husband, and it would be difficult to love such a woman, as she gives no guarantee of her fidelity. But nothing is said of any such separation from another, and the *tertium comparationis* is just the fact that the prophet acts after the analogy of God, and therefore must love a woman who is unfaithful to her marriage with himself. But the difficulty lies in the indefiniteness of the time indicated by the part. **מִנְאָפֶת**. Keil takes it to be future—who will become adulterous: naturally, if the woman is one who is first married to the prophet. But the difficulties which attend the explanation as future are less patent with Keil, for he regards **אֶהְיֶה** = **הָיָה**, which, however, is arbitrary. If we take **אֶהְיֶה** as **אֶהְיֶה**, it is felt im-

mediately that it cannot be simply a future adultery that is here meant. It is meant that love co-exists with adultery at present existing, by which love is not destroyed, but rather is displayed to the adulteress as that which she had trifled with by her infidelity. Hence love is here rather something that is to follow. Only so is it the representative of the attitude of God which is here depicted. For God has indeed loved Israel, though He knew they would afterwards be unfaithful to Him. But it is not that which happened once that is to be exhibited by the prophet, but that which is now transpiring, the *present* conduct of God towards Israel (as in chap. i. the present conduct of Israel towards God, as Keil there correctly remarks; see above). It is this, that God does not withdraw his love from a spouse who has been and still is unfaithful. Besides, the supposition of a future adultery on the part of a wife whom the prophet is to take, is not admissible according to what follows. For the prophet in fulfilling the command makes this impossible for her (ver. 3). And to suppose that she commits adultery in spite of this prohibition in ver. 3 is against ver. 4; for there a condition of Israel is described in which there is no longer adultery (idolatry). Finally, we may ask more generally, how we can call a woman who is to commit adultery at some future time, **אִשָּׁה מִנְאָפֶת**? Therefore

מִנְאָפֶת is to be taken as a preterite or as a present—a woman who has been or is unfaithful to thee. And the conclusion is a necessary one, that a woman is supposed with whom the Prophet was already united. It would then be surprising, if it were quite forgotten in chap. iii. that a marriage of the prophet had already been described, and a new one were introduced. Such a broken, atomizing method of representation can hardly be imputed to a prophetic writer, especially as there is absolute necessity for understanding a reference to chap. i. in the very matter in question. No, as our chapter presupposes the preceding in a general way, it presupposes chap. i. specially; yet it naturally is not a repetition of the image, but an extension of it. There the prophet was commanded to marry a lewd woman (and to beget children by her). When such a woman is married she is no longer a whore, but an adulteress. For a woman, once characterized as **אִשָּׁה זָנִינִים**, naturally retains that character, and when married will be

אִשָּׁה מִנְאָפֶת. It is thus that she appears in chap. iii. And as first the prophet was to marry a whorish woman, so now he is to love the whorish woman as married, i. e., an adulterous wife. Compared with the other this is something higher, something new. The former was to exhibit a disturbed actual condition of things,—the existing inversion of the normal relations between God and Israel (and in the children the deserved punishment); the latter a comforting truth, the desired restitution of those relations. (We might add: As the unpropitious names of the children have been changed into their opposites, the same thing happens in a certain sense in the unpropitious marriage. There it was said: Thou must take a wife just because she is a whore, and so testify against Israel's sin and of their rejection, and now: Thou must love her although she is an adulteress, and so testify of Israel's hope). And as something essentially different is to be symbolized by this relation of the prophet to his wife, it is not to be wondered at—which cannot be denied,—that the form of

the discourse is such that something altogether new appears to begin, or that it appears as though the prophet were now for the first time being brought into relations with this woman. We have here again an indication that we have not to do with real, actual events. A narrative of an actual marriage of the prophet is not given; he is only conceived of as standing in that relation, and since it is only a feigned condition of things, it can very well be viewed first from one side, and then, without any preparation, from another. The woman is naturally called **אִשְׁתִּי**, not **אִשְׁתִּיךָ**. For the emphasis lies upon the predicates; his wife appears here as an adulterous woman = love (in thy wife) an adulterous woman. The absence of the article can therefore not be urged against the identity of this woman with the former. This identity is, in fact, only presupposed in the command of our chapter. The main point is that the Prophet may be thought of (1) as being already married, (2) as experiencing his wife's adultery. No importance is attached to the person of the woman, for no actual event is described. If this were the case, a woman, living in wedlock with the Prophet, could not be spoken of as this one is here described. From this it is evident that we have here only the symbolizing of religious truth; as soon as this is accomplished the person of the woman possesses no further interest.

The suffix in **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** (ver. 2), also appears to allude to a well known woman, and this cannot be disposed of by Keil's remark that the suffix refers simply to the woman mentioned in ver. 1. For according to Keil's view a woman is only described in ver. 1; it is only said what kind of woman she is. This mere predicate of a woman whose person is as yet undefined cannot afterwards be supplied by a personal pronoun but only by: such a woman, or, since that expression is unknown to the Hebrew, by repeating the whole predicate: a woman beloved, etc., if her name were not to be given. The pers. pron. would presuppose that the person named in ver. 1 was already well defined, and not simply a person of the kind described. But this woman is further described as **אִשְׁתִּיךָ**, and that before the other predicate. The sense has been taken differently: (1) = beloved by a paramour, and therefore parallel with **מִנְאָפֶת**, or the latter would express its consequence: beloved by a paramour, and so committing adultery. (2) "Since

אִשְׁתִּיךָ in Jer. iii. 20 denotes a husband but never an adulterous paramour," the phrase is supposed = beloved by a husband and yet practicing adultery. But it is certainly incorrect to say that **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** can be understood only of a husband and not of a paramour. It means paramour in Jer. iii. 1, at all events. It means simply: one with whom one has intercourse, a companion, and specially in the relations of love: one beloved (see the lexicons). The word does not determine whether the intercourse be lawful or not. Therefore the notion of the marriage relation must not be imported into the word, and we must remain by the sense: beloved one (friend, companion). If the marriage relation is indicated, **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** is abstracted from this relation as such, and only its inner side, so to speak, the love that is felt in the married state, is brought into view. Now it is just this disposition of love that is to be emphasized in this connection, and therefore **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** is chosen designedly. The word

would thus be just as suitable used of illicit as of conjugal love. But it is especially in favor of the latter that, so far as the conduct of the woman is brought before us, she appears as the (guilty) subject of a love directed towards another, and is therefore to be represented actively, not passively, as the object of a love displayed by another; hence the passive expression: **אִשְׁתִּיךָ**, would give

an unsuitable sense if it should mean: beloved by a paramour. Israel is essentially one who turns to paramours, runs after them unremittingly, while, on the other hand, Israel is the object of the Husband's love from the beginning, and is here represented as receiving it. Therefore in the figurative presentation also the love is regarded as coming from, and being bestowed by the husband upon the wife. (It would be otherwise if we had

a different punctuation: **אִשְׁתִּיךָ**). Hence the sense is: Love a woman, who, although beloved by her friend, has yet become an adulteress. Her sin is thus sharply stigmatized, that the love enjoined may appear in greater contrast to it and as something unmerited. This view of **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** shows all the more the untenableness of any reference to a woman whom the Prophet must now marry. For that phrase would then allude to some person who now appears for the first time. But what meaning would there be in the command: love a woman who will or is to be beloved by her husband, i. e., by thee? The notion would be more tolerable only if **אִשְׁתִּיךָ** be (with Keil) modified into **אִשְׁתִּי** which is, however, certainly inadmissible. The words: as Jehovah loves the children of Israel, etc., indicate expressly that what the prophet is to do has a symbolical meaning, and declares also what that meaning is. For they are plainly not merely to be connected (Keil) with **אִשְׁתִּיךָ רַע וּמְנָאָפֶת** = (love) a woman who, although beloved by her husband, commits adultery, and who acts as does Israel, who was loved by God and yet, etc. It is more natural to refer them to the command which the prophet received. This command of God, in itself so surprising and exacting, receives by them its symbolical explanation. It is laid upon him only that he may thus exhibit the love of God, who loves his people and manifests that love, in spite of their unfaithfulness, and by the love enjoined upon him he is to represent and assure to the people this love of God.

אִשְׁתִּיךָ does not merely indicate the reason why the prophet is to love this woman, but it declares also how he is to do so: he must not merely "love" in the general, but must love after that definite manner in which Jehovah loves the children of Israel (which is shown immediately thereafter). And love raisin-cakes. These must have been connected in some way with idolatrous worship: they probably belonged to the offerings presented to the idols, and eaten at the idol-festivals. Hence we are to understand first an image of idol-worship, whose enticing dainties are contrasted with the hard and healthy fare of the serious religion of Jehovah. But this special feature of the worship is chosen in order to show the service to be something agreeing with the flesh, satisfying the sensual nature; which explains the more easily Israel's apostasy, and at the same time includes a bitter reproach: "They forget their God for the sake of dainties."

Vers. 2, 3. Then I purchased her for myself for fifteen silverlings, etc. In ver. 2 we neces-

sarily find the fulfilment of the command of ver. 1, the לֵךְ there enjoined. This is a guide to the exposition. With כֶּסֶף we must supply שֶׁקֶל : fifteen shekels of silver. *Homer* is the name of a dry measure = a cor, or ten baths or ten ephahs

(see Ezek. xlv. 11), לֶחֶם = a half homer. Together = a homer and a half or fifteen ephahs. The money value of this quantity of barley cannot be determined; for it is arbitrary to suppose, because fifteen ephahs are mentioned along with fifteen shekels of silver, that therefore they are of equal value, and that an ephah of barley was worth an ephah of silver. An agreement of the numbers would then have been avoided; nothing would have been said of the fifteen ephahs, and an altogether different measure would have been given. Nothing is to be concluded from 2 Kings vii. 1 18, nor from Ex. xxi. 32, if, indeed, the latter can be at all connected with this verse. It is supposed that the passage in Exodus affords the key to the understanding of our passage, and the thirty pieces of silver are sought here the more earnestly. Thirty pieces of silver are there stated to be the price of a slave, and it is supposed that the Prophet paid the same sum for the woman in order to symbolize the state of bondage from which God redeemed Israel. But Kurtz rightly rejects this explanation of the passage and its application to our verse, on the ground that there it is not the price of a slave that is alluded to, but the compensation allowed for a slave killed on account of the carelessness of another. In the latter case it was just as allowable and fitting to fix one and the same price without respect to age, sex, and constitution, as it would have been wrong and foolish to fix the market price under the same conditions. For in the former case (of killing) the responsibility was just the same no matter who the slave might be, a strong man, or a woman, or a decrepit or aged person. Zech. xi. 12 might better be compared. But this passage does not speak of the price of a slave, and besides, it is an arbitrary assumption that our passage speaks of thirty shekels' worth. So we are shut up to an explanation of our passage from itself alone, and we have no sure ground for believing that a redemption from bondage is alluded to. On the other hand, we are not justified in assuming a purchase of the woman from her parents with the pieces of silver, etc., for "it cannot be shown that it was a custom with the Israelites to purchase the bride from her parents" (Keil). Keil therefore holds that the fifteen silverlings, etc., are something given to the woman. Of course it cannot be meant that the pieces of silver, etc., were given to the present paramour of the woman. Such an offering would be itself surprising; but we must also remember that the woman is not conceived of as being adulterously connected with a paramour.

What now does וְאֶתְּרֵךְ mean? It is clear that the meaning "dig" is unsuitable here, for the explanation of Hengstenberg, from Ex. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17, is strange and awkward. In Gen. i. 5; Deut. ii. 6; Job vi. 27; xl. 30, it has the meaning: purchase, make a bargain; in the last

two passages with עַל of the person or thing for וְאֶתְּרֵךְ about which the bargain was made; in the first two with an accusative = to purchase, buy; in the first with לְ , of the person who is bought; in the second with בְּ , of the price paid. So also here: וְאֶתְּרֵךְ purchased her to me for, etc. This certainly ap-

pears not to agree with our explanation of chap. iii., which we hold is concerned with a woman with whom the prophet is already married; but this contradiction is only apparent. For, though the woman is married to the prophet, she is yet an adulterous wife, and has therefore renounced her husband (compare Israel's attitude towards God). If he "loves" her still, and would prove to her his enduring love, he must act towards her as one who weds a wife, he must purchase her, like a stranger, with a bridal gift. If this points to the guilt, the extreme estrangement of the woman, it shows also directly the endurance of the husband's love that he should act thus, that he should treat as a bride a degraded, adulterous wife, from whom it would be most natural to cut himself entirely loose, that he should even give her a bridal present in opposition to all natural inclinations! Yet this is not a blind love, but it corresponds to the circumstances of the case (compare God's attitude towards Israel), a love which involves a beneficial chastening. This is indicated in our verse. It is assuredly not without design that a production of nature forms part of the gift. It shows that it was intended for the support of life. It is probably indicated that the woman is not yet taken into the husband's house; for such a gift would then have no meaning. Further, the bridal gift is such a one as the wife had the least right to claim or expect: a token that her husband loves her still and will not cut himself off wholly from her. And if this cannot be maintained with certainty, it is still probable (barley was among the ancients a food but little esteemed) that this whole present was not at all a rich one, but only barely sufficient, especially if we can assume that it was to last "many days." Ver. 3 gives additional information as to the action of the prophet described in ver. 2, $\text{וְיָשָׁב רַבִּיּוֹתַי}$, an indefinite period of long duration: the end will depend upon the conduct of the wife. $\text{וְיָשָׁב רַבִּיּוֹתַי}$ = to sit, i. e.,

"to keep quiet. The וְיָשָׁב shows that such conduct was to be observed with reference to the husband, that he so disposes of her from love to her, in order to improve her and educate her to become his faithful wife."

$\text{וְיָשָׁב רַבִּיּוֹתַי}$ therefore does not mean: dwell with me. What was remarked in ver. 2 proves this already, and the meaning of ver. 4, especially, would not suit such a sense, for a relation of communion with God is here denied. The

difficult words $\text{וְיָשָׁב רַבִּיּוֹתַי}$, are probably to be explained in a corresponding manner with the recent expositors: and I will be so towards thee, namely, observe the same conduct towards thee, i. e., have no conjugal intercourse with thee. Another explanation is: and I also will hold myself ready for thee, wait for thee, i. e., not take any other wife. This is possible in itself, but not suitable to ver. 4, which contains the explanation of ver. 3. For this verse contains only a negative thought (see on ver. 4). Therefore the sense of the whole is: The Prophet displays unmerited love towards his adulterous wife, according to the command $\text{וְיָשָׁב רַבִּיּוֹתַי}$ for, like a bridegroom he again ac-

quires her with a bridal gift. But this love has also for its object the improvement of the wife, and he therefore manifests his love in such a manner as to secure that end. He cares for her support but limits her allowance that she may learn salutary humilitv. He naturally interdicts her adul-

erous habits, but does not at once resume his conjugal intercourse with her. This is therefore a manifestation of love of a disciplinary character, but still essentially of love, — just as is that of God toward Israel.

Ver. 4. For many days will the children of Israel sit, etc. Ver. 4 is the explanation (פִּי = for) of ver. 3. Three pairs of objects are named of which the children of Israel shall be deprived. King and prince — holders of the civil government, which will therefore cease in Israel. Also the worship will cease with it. This is represented by the

two following, זָבַח, sacrifice, and מִזְבֵּיחַ, statues, defining the sense more closely. Besides these, two objects used as oracles are mentioned: the ephod, which was strictly the High-priest's shoulder-garment, with the Urim and Thummim, which was put on or brought out when oracles were given. It is brought into view here evidently not in relation to the High-priest, but on account of its connection with oracles in general, as its use was imitated even by idolaters in worship (Judges xvii.

5; xviii. 14, 17, 18, 20). The יִרְדֵּי were also used for the same purpose. They are equivalent to *Penates* (comp. Zech. xix. 2; Ezek. xxi. 26), and in the passage cited from Judges are mentioned along with the ephod. Whether the sense is that Israel will have neither the worship of Jehovah nor idolatry, remains doubtful. For, according to what has been said, the ephod does not directly imply the worship of Jehovah; still less does זָבַח. Probably the distinction between the two is not implied, but worship simply indicated. The condition of things is described as one of the deprivation of that which had been Israel's support (king and prince) and joy and consolation (sacrifice, etc.); and the important fact is that idolatry should cease. This should be effected against Israel's desire, would be a punishment like the cessation of their own government, civil independence; but the punishment is a chastening in love, a token that God had not forgotten Israel. It is true that this positive truth, of a manifestation of love, lies in the background in our verse, which wears a negative aspect. But this love was declared in ver. 1 to be the main thought, and in ver. 5 (whose purport, moreover, transcends the symbol) it appears quite clearly by the issue to be the object in view.

Ver. 5. Afterwards will the children of Israel return: a *post hoc* which includes, however, clearly a *propter hoc*, i. e., the situation described in ver. 4 is an essential cooperating factor. Will seek Jehovah their God and David their king. "Seeking Jehovah their God is connected with seeking David their king. For as the apostasy of the ten tribes from the kingdom of David was only the consequence and result of its inner apostasy from Jehovah, so the true return to God could not take place without a return to their king David, since God had promised the kingdom to David forever in his seed (2 Sam. vii. 13, 16); thus David is the only true king of Israel — *their king*" (Keil). The family of David is probably primarily meant, and more strictly, a king of that family. The conclusion, "at the end of the days," alludes to the Messianic period, according to prophetic usage elsewhere; hence we are justified in assuming the Messiah to be also meant here. Will tremble towards Jehovah. יָרָע, to tremble; with לֵב it forms a pregnant expression: tremble hastening towards.

It is a stronger expression for the preceding שָׁקַח = seek with anxiety, since the needed help is found in the One sought; therefore sought with solicitude, although He assuredly will be found, because He is the seeker's only dependence. This is thus the direct contrast to the former abandonment of Jehovah and seeking help in idols. What is sought in God is *his goodness*, especially in his gifts, of which they had been deprived (comp. Jer xxxi. 12; Zech. ix. 17). On the end of the days see the preceding remarks. This is therefore the end of the "many days," or the fuller explanation of יָרָע.

[The discussion given above of this chapter is so full and able, both as to its general purport and as to its special features, that no additions are necessary from any writer holding the identity of the woman here described with that of chap. i. The force of some of the arguments employed is overestimated, and others, as is readily perceived, are too largely based on mere speculation, yet the general results go to show the strong probability of the correctness of this hypothesis and of its consequences, where they affect the interpretation of individual passages. The recent English commentators agree with the majority of the moderns in holding this view. Newcome adopts the old opinion that the Prophet's former wife (Gomer) had died in the interval. Noyes thinks that it is immaterial whether the women are identical or not. The fullness of the discussion of the several minor features of this short chapter precludes the necessity of additions from the remarks of Anglo-American expositors, which are, moreover, usually of a comparatively general nature. On some points, as, for example, the object of the "purchase" of the woman, and its symbolical meaning, the difficulties cannot be said to be yet satisfactorily solved. — M.]

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. On the love of Jehovah to Israel, which endures in spite of all unfaithfulness, but does not forget to chasten, see the Introduction, and especially No. 1 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section attached to chap. ii.

2. A condition of things, such as that threatened in ver. 4, characterized the kingdom of the ten tribes when they were led away into exile by Assyria; and in this we can see a fulfillment, although nothing is said of any captivity, and in fact nothing of the manner in which the kingdom and worship should cease. It is very doubtful, to say the least, whether we can claim for the threatening a wider range, and make it apply also to the kingdom of Judah. Nothing can be adduced from the resemblance to the threatening which the Prophet Azariah uttered against Judah in the days of Asa (2 Chron. xv. 2, 4). For ver. 5 of our chapter points too clearly to the kingdom of the ten tribes, and no judgments are pronounced against Judah until the later chapters, which belong to a later period. The threatening goes hand in hand with the promise. The latter holds out, first of all, a return, which, according to the words: shall seek Jehovah their God, is to be taken as a contrast to the resort made to other gods (ver. 1). According to the promise they will also seek David their king. [See the passage quoted from Keil in the exegetical section.] The house of David is naturally the primary object of the reference. For in returning thither they acknowledge the divine

right of David to the kingdom. This promise is shown here indubitably to be Messianic by the expression ; "at the end of the days," which "does not denote the future in general, but always the coming consummation of the kingdom of God, which begins with the advent of the Messiah." (Keil.) We cannot, therefore, find the fulfillment in that which happened in the return from the Babylonian exile, apart from the consideration that that event affected mainly the kingdom of Judah, while here the kingdom of Israel is the subject of discourse ; thus the promise was not then fulfilled. Hence the question is suggested here also : Since this promise was not fulfilled to Israel even with the coming of the Messiah, has it fallen to the ground, or is the fulfillment yet to be expected ? According to what has been remarked under chap. i., both questions are to be answered in the negative, and the answer rather is : The fulfillment has already begun in Him, in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen, but in another and far higher sense than the Prophet imagined, who saw the people of God in Israel alone. Separating the kernel from the husk, we must, upon the ground of the New Covenant, see the fulfillment in the gathering of a people of God around a descendant of David who was greater than David's son, — around Christ. And so, though this is not the literal meaning of the promise, "King David" that one of David's family who was to be sought after, is the Messiah. In this Son of David it is fulfilled, though not yet completely. The promise is still in course of fulfillment, and to its perfect fulfillment is specially necessary the universal conversion of Israel to Christ, but, as is natural, not merely the people of the ten tribes, here literally indicated.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. LUTHER : Let us cease to fear the wrath and judgment of God on account of our

sins, and believe what the Prophet says, that God is like a husband who, although he has been deserted by an adulterous wife and is angry thereat, is yet more impelled by mercy, than urged by the sin of the adulteress, and wins her back to his love. And truly has the Prophet in two respects set forth great things. For, in the first place, he could not describe sin as being more dreadful than he here pictures it in the sin of the adulteress. And, again, he extols highly the love of God by this image, when he says that He is animated by love towards the adulteress.

[PUSEY : His love was to outlive hers, that He might win her at last to Himself. Such, God says, is the love of the Lord for Israel. — M.]

[Ver. 2. MATTHEW HENRY : Those whom God designs honor and comfort for He first makes sensible of their own worthlessness, and brings them to acknowledge with the prodigal : "I am no more worthy to be called thy son." Poverty and disgrace sometimes prove a happy means of making great sinners penitent. Comp. the Exegetical remarks. — M.]

Ver. 4. Although it is a great punishment of God, that a government should be cast down, it is yet a much greater punishment that liberty should be taken away to serve God and teach his Word.

LUTHER : Ver. 5. These are glorious words of the Prophet who thus combines God and Christ in worship, so that, when we call upon God, we should do so through Christ ; when we hope in the mercy of God we hope through Christ that God would have mercy on us.

[PUSEY : So God's goodness overflows with beneficence and condescension, and graciousness and mercy and forgiving love, and joy in imparting Himself, and complacency in the creatures which He has reformed, and refund, redeemed, and sanctified for his glory. Well may his creatures tremble towards it with admiring wonder that all this can be made theirs ! — M.]

PART SECOND.

JEHOVAH PLEADS WITH ISRAEL HIS BELOVED BUT UNFAITHFUL SPOUSE.

CHAPTERS IV.-XIV.

FIRST DISCOURSE.

CHAPTERS IV.-XI.

I. THE ACCUSATION.

CHAPTERS IV.-VII.

A. *Against the People as a Whole on Account of their Idolatry and the Corruption of their Morals (promoted by the Priests).*

CHAPTER IV. 1-19.

- 1 Hear the word of Jehovah, ye children of Israel !
For Jehovah has a difference with the inhabitants of the land,
Because there is no fidelity and no goodness
And no knowledge of God in the land ;
- 2 (Only) cursing and lying,
And murdering and stealing and adultery ;
They break in, and murder follows upon murder.
- 3 Therefore will the land mourn,
And all who dwell therein shall languish,
With the beast¹ of the field and the bird of heaven ;
And the fish of the sea also shall be swept away.
- 4 Only let none contend,
And let none reprove (another) ;
And thy people² is like those that strive with the priest.
- 5 And thou shalt fall in the day-time.
And the Prophet also shall fall with thee in the night,
And I will destroy thy mother.
- 6 My people are destroyed for want of knowledge !³
Because thou despisest knowledge,
So do I despise thee³ to be my Priest ;
Because thou dost forget the law of thy God,
I also will forget thy children.
- 7 The more they increased the more they sinned against me
Their glory will I turn into shame.
- 8 They eat [make profit of] the sin of my people,
And direct their desires after their transgressions.
- 9 And so it is : as the people, so the priest,
And I will visit their ways upon them,
And reward to them their deeds.
- 10 Then they shall eat and not be satisfied,
Will practice whoredom and not spread abroad,
Because they forgot⁴ Jehovah, to regard Him.

- 11 Whoredom and wine and new wine
Will take (possession of) a heart.
- 12 My people⁵ inquires of its wood [idols],
And their staff shall declare to it;
For the spirit of whoredom has deceived them,
And they commit whoredom (departing) from under their God.
- 13 They sacrifice on the summits of the mountains,
And burn incense on the hills;
Under the oak and poplar and terebinth,
Because their shadow is pleasant.
Therefore your daughters commit whoredom
And your daughters-in-law commit adultery.
- 14 Yet I will not visit upon [punish] your daughters because they commit whoredom.
Nor your daughters-in-law because they commit adultery;
For they [you] themselves go aside with prostitutes,
And sacrifice with temple-girls,
And the people without understanding shall be cast down.
- 15 If thou commit whoredom, O Israel!
Let not Judah become guilty,
Go not to Gilgal,
And ascend not to Beth-aven,
And swear not: by the life of Jehovah.
- 16 For Israel is as intractable as an unbroken heifer;
Now Jehovah will pasture them
Like a lamb in a wide field.
- 17 Ephraim is joined to idols — let him be.
- 18 Their drinking-feast is spoiled;
They keep on whoring.
Their shields [rulers] keep on loving shame.⁶
- 19 The tempest seizes them with its wings:
And they shall be ashamed of their sacrifices.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 3. — בְּחִיתָ רֹג' ^ב used here as in Gen. vii. 21; ix. 10, to specify or enumerate objects indicated before in the general. In usage, though not in grammatical function, it is equivalent to our *namely*. — M.]

[2 Ver. 4. — וְעִמָּהּ. Newcome gives a variety of emendations and transpositions, partly from other sources, in order to obtain a more natural sense than the one he draws from the text. He seems to have been misled by the difficulty suggested by Houbigant, who remarks that it could not be a crime to contend with idolatrous priests. These of course are not meant. See the exposition. Among the ancient translators, the LXX., Aquila, and Arab. read עִמִּי: my people, which seems more natural but is not necessary. — M.] Meier would point differently, and reads וְעִמָּהּ: with thee, against thee, namely, God, and makes the negation continue: (let no one be) against thee. This is forced. The וְיְהִי would be necessary, and עִמִּי would not be the proper preposition.

[3 Ver. 6. — We must not read הִעֲרַת מִבְּלִי unexpectedly (Meier). The article is essential — הַמִּבְּלִי. According to the Masora the third בִּ is superfluous, and therefore probably a chirographical error. According to Ewald it is an Aramaic pausal form. [Henderson: The third בִּ is not found in a great number of Kennicott's and De Rossi's manuscripts, nor in some of the earlier printed editions; in others it is marked as redundant, and a few have מִבְּלִי מִבְּלִי. — M.]

4 Ver. 10. — לְשֹׁמֵר. Meier attaches this word to the following verse: to practice lewdness, etc. But this is forced. [Henderson cites the similar view of Saadiah, Arnold, and Horsley, but thinks "there is something so repugnant to Hebrew usage in the combination: to observe fornication, wine and new wine, that it is altogether inadmissible." But his choice of the term "observe" is arbitrary. In thus opposing Horsley, he overlooks the fact that the latter renders: to give attention to, a sense of the word which is not at all repugnant to Hebrew usage. It must be remembered that they "neglected" Jehovah or dropped Him from their thoughts; the antithesis would naturally be: to keep in mind lewdness, etc. This is the exact usage of the word in Gen. xxxvii. 11; Ps. cxxx. 3. Horsley's arguments are mainly based upon the double anomaly of the construction as formerly assumed, in which עֹבֵר was supposed to govern its object indirectly (and irregularly) by means of לְ with the infinitive, and שֹׁמֵר was regarded as governing (against usage) יְהוָה as its direct object: they forsook to regard Jehovah. עֹבֵר is now admitted by some to govern יְהוָה directly, and the pers. pron.: *him*, is supplied after *regard*, as is done by Schmoller. But, even with this construction the omission of the object in the original after לְשֹׁמֵר would be unaccountable and very abrupt. To these consider

tions this other may be added, that under the present division of the verses, ver. 11 is made unusually brief. These difficulties in the way of the ordinary constructions should lead us to regard the subversion of the mark of division between the verses with more favor than should ordinarily be shown to attempts at amending the text. The proposed change would give the translation: because they have neglected Jehovah to set their minds on whoredom and wine and new wine, (which) will take possession of the heart. — M.]

[5 Ver. 12. — Henderson: "The LXX. and most versions which follow them connect עִמִּי with לֵב at the end of the preceding verse; a mode of construction adopted by Michaelis and Dathe, but otherwise disapproved by modern translators. — M.]

6 Ver. 18. — הָהָבּוּ הָהָבּוּ perhaps belong together, a *pialal* form from הָהָב, except that the doubling has been separated in an extraordinary manner. It is therefore really instead of הָהָבּוּ הָהָבּוּ. Wünsche would read הָהָבּוּ הָהָבּוּ resembling the preceding הָהָבּוּ הָהָבּוּ. [On this combination see Green, *Gr.*, §§ 92 a, 122, 1; Ewald, § 120 a; Böttcher, § 1055 b. These grammarians, as well as the best critics generally, regard it as one word. The form with which it is usually compared is שִׁמְרוּהֶנִּי, Ps. lxxxviii. 17. The last named author calls our form a *Qetaltal*, corresponding to the form adopted by Schinoller. The notion conveyed by such forms is that of intensity, or repetition. So Ewald: *es lieben lieben Schmach seine Schilde*. Comp the rendering of Delitzsch in the passage just cited: *vernicht-nichtigt*. If the alternative of separate words be adopted, it would be almost necessary to adopt some such expedient as that of Wünsche given above; for the rendering of E. V.: her rulers with shame do love; give ye, is almost unintelligible. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Four strophes may be supposed with Keil (vers. 1-5; 6-10; 11-14; 16-19), although it can hardly be maintained in general, that our Prophet observes a strict strophical division.

Ver. 1. Hear the word of Jehovah, etc. Jehovah appears against Israel as a Judge (that is, Israel of the Ten Tribes, comp. ver. 15), who raises the accusation, and pronounces the sentence and punishment. In a certain sense this first strophe contains the sense of the whole. Jehovah has a contest = legal action, comp. Micah vi. 2, and with relation to the heathen, Joel iii. 2. — הָאֱלֹהִים is

faithfulness, trueness to one's word. הָאֱלֹהִים is affection, kindness, love. These qualities are frequently mentioned together; usually as divine attributes, but sometimes also as human virtues. הָאֱלֹהִים is here probably special kindness towards the feeble and distressed (Keil). The opposites are primarily moral defects. But they have their root in that which is Israel's grand defect, in the want of the knowledge of God, i. e., they do not know the living God or know Him any longer — naturally through their own fault — since they do not care to serve Him.

Ver. 2. Along with the negative description of the corruption we have the positive. The sins are not described by substantives, but are expressed in a lively manner as actions by verbs, and that with special emphasis by the inf. absol. Five sins are thus mentioned, corresponding to five of the Ten Commandments, and at the same time these sins form a definite contrast to fidelity and goodness. Swearing along with lying naturally = false swearing, or, at all events, wanton swearing.

וְכָרַח forms the transition to the finite verb; the last three sins, especially murder, are represented in the concrete, and at the same time as something fearfully prevalent. [The literal translation of the the last three words is: and bloody deed touches

bloody deed. דְּמָמָה meant originally: drops of blood, then transferred to deeds of blood in general, and it is altogether probable that this word was chosen here to present to the imagination the picture of a swift succession of murderous assaults, following so closely that drops of the blood of one victim might be conceived as meeting and mingling with those of another. If so, this is a striking

illustration of Hosea's wonderful power of graphic poetical delineation. Henderson: "What the Prophet means is that murder was so common that no space was left between its acts. LXX.: ἀμαρτα ἐφ' ἀμαρτι μύροισσι. Coverdale: one bloudgiltyness foloweth another. And Ritterhusius powerfully in his poetical metaphor: —

— 'Sic sanguini sanguis
Tuditur, et scelus nullus finisve modus est.'"

See 2 Kings xv.; Micah vii. 2. — M.]

Ver. 3. Therefore will the land mourn, etc. The punishment of that moral deprivation; a great and universal drought, such, e. g., as prevailed under Ahab, was a judgment of God. This is described in its effects: The mourning of the land is a lively figurative expression for the scorching away of all vegetable productions, and the languishing of animal life, and the beasts are named, because the drought was, so to speak, to be described from its natural side (comp. Joel i. 10 ff.). It is just in this condition of nature generally that God executes judgment upon man. The drought is not to be conceived of as existing at present, but is threatened, as the whole chapter generally is occupied with threatening. כָּל־יִשָּׁב

כָּל probably does not refer to the men themselves but is specified by the following כָּל, and therefore refers to the beasts, etc. [Keil: 'כָּל' is used in the enumeration of the individuals as in Gen. vii. 21; ix. 10. The fishes are mentioned last, and introduced by the emphatic וְכָל to show that the drought would prevail to such an extent that even lakes and other bodies of waters would be dried up. וְכָל־יִשָּׁב: to be collected, to be taken away, to disappear or perish." — M.]

Ver. 4. Only let none contend, and let none reprove, etc. These words appear quite unexpected and are not quite clear. There seems to be a verbal reference to ver. 1; and it may be that there is a contrast to that contending there announced on the part of God. The sense would then be: The Lord will contend, but it is presumptuous for men to strive against Him; none are to contend or reprove. Or we might forego the reference to ver. 1, and explain generally: let none contend or reprove! The hardened hearts of the people would then be referred to, who would listen to no rebuke. So Luther after the Vulgate

yet let none rebuke, etc. But **יֵשׁ** is thus falsely rendered. It is not = yet. Therefore others hold that there is a demand "only" to neglect pleading with and rebuking the corrupt people. There would indeed be much to rebuke, but it would be to no purpose (Keil). But this thought is not suitable to the context. It is just on the part of God that the **יֵשׁ** does take place, and is not the whole prophetic discourse a rebuke? Others suppose a demand to the people not to resist God and his judgment. But **הַרְבֵּי** will not suit here; it must be taken in the sense of censuring: let none censure God and his deeds. The explanation of Wünsche is therefore better: let none quarrel with another and attribute to him the blame of the calamity. And thy people as those who contend with the priest, that is, are like those, etc. With the first explanation of the preceding words, the ones now considered would surround them with still greater difficulties: let none contend — uttered with respect to the spirit of contradiction among the people — and they act as, etc. With the second explanation the words serve to support the preceding, to show the uselessness of contending and rebuking: yet thy people are like, etc. The explanation of Wünsche shows the best connection: the reason is given why none should reproach the others: the whole people are alike. In form however the sentence is not a confirmatory one, being simply coördinated by **וְ** [This objection is not conclusive. **וְ** very often introduces a reason. See Green, *Gr.*, § 287, 1. The opinion assigned to Wünsche is that not only adopted in E. V. but approved by most of the recent English commentators. Noyes prefers the view assigned above to Keil. On attempts to amend the text for other renderings, see the Textual note. — M.] Contend with the priest — an unexpected expression, perhaps to be explained by Dent. xvii. 12 f. The people are like those who in the Law are described as rebels against the authority of the priest. They are therefore those who would not allow themselves to be directed aright by those whose prerogative it was to direct them (Hengstenberg, Keil).

Ver. 5. **קִטְלֵם** naturally refers to the punishment [as the cause of the fall (destruction) of the people, whom the Prophet now directly addresses. — M.] Prophet, naturally = false prophets (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 6 ff.), "who followed prophesying as a source of gain." In the day, — by night: a figurative representation distributed according to the members of the sentence. The meaning is: the people and prophets shall fall all the time. And I will destroy thy mother = the whole nation conceived of as the mother of the children of Israel.

Ver. 5. My people is destroyed. **מִבְּלִי** **לֹא יָדָעָה**, not: unawares (Meier), but: from want of knowledge [see Gram. note], i. e., chiefly, knowledge of God. Yet the expression is to be taken primarily in its general reference; compare the beginning and end of the next strophe [vers. 11–14]. This want of knowledge is blameworthy, a despising of knowledge. This shows the nearer reference to be to the knowledge of God. Israel could have gained this from the law, but had forgotten that law. And I will despise thee from being a priest to me. This does not refer to the priest simply. All Israel, according to Ex. xix. 6,

was to be a priestly people, and to be thus distinguished from the heathen, the profane. But they were to forfeit this high prerogative. The notion therefore = "shall be not-my-people," chaps. i.–ii.

Ver. 7. The more they increased, not merely in numbers, but in prosperity, power, etc., — the more they sinned; comp. ii. 7. They ascribed this prosperity to their idols, and were thus confirmed in idolatry. Accordingly Israel's glory, consisting in their richness and greatness, shall be turned into shame, i. e., they shall lose their glory and stand dishonored.

Ver. 8. A transition to the Priests, according to the purport of the words, and the beginning of ver. 9. They eat the sin of my people. They live upon, derive their support from, the sin of the people. That is their right to do so, the more the people sin, i. e., serve idols. For the very existence of the idol priesthood depended upon the idolatry of the people. Keil, still more specially, makes **עֲוֹן הָעָם** = sin-offering of the people (so also Luther). In the Law the priest was enjoined to eat the flesh of the sin-offering to blot out the sin of the people (Lev. vi. 19). But that became sin to the priests, because (second member of the verse) they directed their desires towards the transgression of the people, that is, wished their transgressions to multiply, so as to acquire a large supply of food from their offerings. The peculiar expression: eat the sin, may still bear allusion to the sacrificial ritual. But the notion is probably more general: they live upon the sin = the idolatry of the people, as they eat the flesh of the sacrifice offered to idols. He lifts up his soul towards = directs his desires towards. The singular suffix is anomalous; it is perhaps distributive: each one lifts up his soul. The meaning of the whole would be: Since they live upon the sin of my people, they wish for nothing more earnestly than that the people should keep on sinning more and more, namely, in idolatry. [So the expositors generally. — M.]

Ver. 9. Since the priests go hand in hand with the people, the people serving idols and the priests desiring their idolatry, a like punishment will overtake them all. [Henderson: "The rank and wealth of the priests will not exempt them from sharing the same fate with the rest of the nation." — M.]

Ver. 10. They will eat, etc. "Eat" refers back to ver. 8, and therefore the primary reference is to the priests — **הִזְנֵה**. The usual force of the **hiphil** = entice to whoredom, would hardly suit here, although it is the priests who are spoken of.

The addition **וְלֹא יִסְרִיבוּ** is unsuitable to this sense, for an extension by the procreation of children, which is here denied of them, could be predicated of those who commit whoredom, but not of those who only seduce others into that sin. Therefore it probably = a strengthened **kal**, as in ver. 18; 2 Chron. xxi. 13. The literal signification cannot here be excluded, if we take into account the conclusion of the verse, and especially the parallelism with "eat." Ver. 11, also, necessitates the conjunction of whoredom with "wine and must" = debauchery, and thus supports the literal interpretation, as also in vers. 13, 14, the daughters are said to be actual whores. But yet all this is only the consequence of spiritual whoredom = idolatry, and in closest connection with it. It is that which is to be rebuked, and the figurative sense therefore predominates in ver. 12, where idolatrous practices are special-

denounced, in the expression: spirit of whoredom. Whoredom as a consequence of idolatry, and as connected with it, and idolatry itself, are to the prophet perfectly identical, because inseparably united. The reason why they will not be satisfied or be extended, which are negative expressions affirming strongly their opposite, is that they forsook to regard. The expression refers to Jehovah: they forsook Jehovah, to keep Him, to regard, to honor Him (comp. Ps. xxxi. 7; Prov. xxvii. 18) = they forsook Him and ceased to regard, honor Him. [See Gram. note. — M.]

Ver. 11. Whoredom and wine and new wine takes possession of the heart, לֵב, "the centre of the whole spiritual and moral life, the understanding, the will, and the sensibilities" (Wünsche). Hence the capture of the heart = the obscuring and perversion of the understanding and the will, expressing generally the intellectually and morally polluting influence of a life given up to sensual enjoyment. Then in the first member of ver. 12 a proof of this is adduced, — a special instance of apostasy from the living God.

Ver. 12. תִּשְׁאֵל בַּעֲצוֹ, inquire of idols framed of wood, especially teraphim, in order to gain a divine revelation; in direct contrast to שְׁאֵל יְהוָה. The reproach is made keener by the contrasted words: *my* people, *their* wood: the people who are Jehovah's seek to wood, which is made their god instead of Jehovah. Their staff shall instruct them. This was the so-called rhabdomancy: two staves placed upright were allowed to fall while incantations were being repeated, and an oracular response was supposed to be given by the direction of its fall, backwards or forwards, to the right or to the left. [So described by Cyril of Alexandria. Compare the use of divining-rods or wishing-rods. — M.] This course of action is expressly attributed to the influence of a *spirit of whoredom*: idolatry (in connection with its consequences, whoredom and debauchery) is a seductive, demoniacal power, which they could no longer resist. בְּמִתְחַת אֵלָיו, literally, from under their God, like גִּלְגָּל (i. 2), the normal relation to God is here regarded as one of subjection. It is from this that they withdraw themselves.

Ver. 13. Upon the summits of the mountains, etc. (comp. Deut. xii. 2; Jer. ii. 20; iii. 6; Ezek. vi. 13). Mountains and hills, as is well known, were favorite places for idolatrous worship. So also were green and shady trees in pleasant places (here specified instead of the usual general expression, "under every green tree"). "Therefore" = because the places of idol-worship everywhere arranged gave abundant opportunity, therefore your daughters commit lewdness (Keil). "Lewdness" is here, at all events, used in its literal sense, see especially ver. 14, second part. The prostitution of young maidens and of wives formed an essential portion of the nature-worship of Babylon and Canaan. It would seem from the mention of temple-girls in ver. 14 that the worship of Astarte, or something similar, is implied. But, even apart from this, the sensuous character of idolatry commonly induced unchaste practices.

Ver. 14. Those who are young cannot be blamed, for those who are older are worse still. הֵם: they = husbands and fathers. יִזְכֹּר, here intransitive:

to go aside in order to be alone with the לִוְיָהוּשׁ is one who is consecrated to the service of Astarte, or some similar Canaanitish divinity, women who prostituted themselves for gain. Offer with the temple-girls: appear with them at the altar. To such an extent did they carry their impudence and shamelessness. At the end of the strophe want of understanding is again emphasized; it is this that brings them to their fall.

Vers. 15-19 contain a warning to Judah not to participate in Israel's idolatry and shameless conduct, in order to escape the dreadful ruin of the former.

Ver. 15. If thou, Israel, dost commit whoredom. Whoredom is here predominantly employed in its metaphorical, but includes also the literal sense. A participation in Israel's idolatry would have been induced by pilgrimages to the shrines of the ten tribes, which still, presumably, were made. Such places were: Gilgal, southwest from Shiloh, now Djidjilia, formerly the seat of a School of the Prophets (2 Kings ii. 1; iv. 38); later a seat of idolatrous worship, and mentioned as such besides in our Prophet, ix. 15; xii. 12, and Amos iv. 4; v. 5; and Bethel, south of Gilgal, near the borders of Israel and Judah; now Betin. This is probably meant here by Beth-Aven, the name being intentionally changed; comp. Amos v. 5; mentioned also in Amos iv. 4 along with Gilgal. Swear not: by the life of Jehovah. This cannot be forbidden in itself, for in Deut. vi. 13; xx. 20 it is directly enjoined. Swearing applied to the service of idolatry must be meant, and that in the two places above-mentioned. It appears evident that certain formulas of swearing characteristic of Jehovah's worship were employed in idolatrous service, and that for the purpose of giving to the latter a seeming justification.

Ver. 16. The punishment of Israel is pointed out in order to strengthen the warning to Judah.

כִּרְרָה, intractable, stubborn, will not be subject to God. God then gives them a free course — bitter irony, — like a sheep on a wide plain: that is, they shall be dispersed far and wide. [Henderson: "The latter hemistich contains the language of irony. As lambs are fond of ranging at large, but are in danger of being lost or devoured, so God threatens to remove the Israelites into a distant and large country, where they would be separated from those with whom they associated in idolatrous worship, and thus be left solitary and exposed as in a wilderness. The phrase, to feed in a large place, is elsewhere used in a good sense. Is. xxx. 23." — M.]

Ver. 17. Joined to idols, i. e., joined to them so fast that they cannot give them up; therefore probably הִתְחַיֵּל = let them, that is, keep on, let them serve idols forever, the punishment will not delay. Ephraim was the most powerful of the ten tribes, and therefore often stands for the ten tribes generally. [The other interpretation, not so much favored, but numbering amongst its supporters Jerome, Grotius, Rosenmüller, and Maurer, is that the inhabitants of Judah are commanded to have nothing to do with the idolatry of Israel. This view has also the support of Cowles, but the other is approved by the majority of the English expositors. — M.]

Ver. 18. A difficult one. סִבָּה liquor, then: a drinking-bout. Fürst assumes besides כֹּר כֹּר

turn aside, another **סר** to become worthless or corrupt, here = to be spoiled. So also Keil [so also Ewald, Horsley, Pusey, and others, with E. V. — M.]. Meier takes it in the usual sense, to be removed, disappear: their carousing has disappeared. He then takes the following as in sense a dependent sentence: the carousing of those who commit whoredom, whose shields, etc. But this is rather artificial. To be sure, the mention of the punishment might be expected here, but it is just as suitable that ver. 18 should describe only their wicked conduct, and ver. 19 pictures them as being seized by a storm-wind in the midst of it. [Henderson translates the first clause: when their carousals are over they indulge in lewdness. Here

סר is supposed to be omitted. Cowles suggests the impossible explanation: He (Ephraim) becomes more apostate from God through strong drink. — M.] Along with their debauchery they commit whoredom, — again in the double sense. [For the construction of the next clause, see Gram. note. — M.] The shame which they love is not expressed, but is clearly enough contained in the two preceding hemistichs, therefore = shameful conduct in a moral sense; not = what brings disgrace upon them in its punishment. Her shields = her princes, as defenders of the people. "Her" refers to Ephraim, regarded as the wife. The princes are named specially: the whole nation is corrupt from the highest to the lowest.

Ver. 19. In the midst of their sins destruction carries them away like a tempest with irresistible force. **צרר** = bind together; seize upon. It is the prophetic preterite. The tempest is regarded as already present. **יִבְשׁוּ מִיְּבֻחָהֶם**. This means either that they shall be shamed away from their sacrifices, because they were proved not to be able to help them, or that they shall be ashamed of their sacrifices. The sense is that both they and their sacrifices would be put to shame.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. With bold freedom and with holy earnestness the Prophet here displays a picture of the religious and moral corruption of the nation, before which we tremble. He has an eye open for both, and expresses most clearly the inseparable connection between religion and morality. Not only is immorality censured, but the religious depravation also (vers. 1-6, 10-12, 13), so that it may be clearly perceived that this religious decline is the source of the moral corruption, and therefore the (true) religion, that belief in Jehovah is the root of all morality. Observe here how the knowledge of God is exhibited as the essence of religion, and the want of this knowledge as the great error in connection with religion. Apostasy from God therefore consists or is rooted in the loss of the knowledge of Him, which includes not merely a theoretical cognition, but also belief in Him, as the self-revealed God, and the acquaintance and intimacy with Him thence drawn by experience. It is thus that Hosea elsewhere also insists upon the "knowledge of Jehovah" (v. 4; vi. 3, and specially 6). In contrast hereto the idolater is described as one who is "joined to idols" (ver. 17), enters into conjugal intercourse with them. The Prophet, however, does not, in a one-sided fashion, pay exclusive attention to the conduct of the people with respect to religion, but lays just as much

stress upon the moral consequences of their religious decline. In his several pictures he brands and rebukes the depravation of morals; want of fidelity and goodness, swearing, lying, stealing, murder, and adultery. Murdering and stealing, probably includes also deeds of violence committed against the poor, defenseless, etc. Special prominence is given to sins against the Sixth [Seventh] Commandment, which, on the basis of idolatry raged so violently in consequence of the terrible increase of unchaste practices during the prevalence of heathen religion and rites. The morally destructive influence of devotion to sensual and fleshly lusts is aptly described in the rebuke of ver. 11: it takes possession of the heart, and the extent of that influence is shown in vers. 13, 14, where the complete destruction of all morality in domestic life is described. A large element of the moral corruption is the influence exerted by the corruption of the priests who make gain of the people's sins (vers. 8, 9), partly also of the prophets. It is also here to be observed how, on the other hand, the moral corruption hastens the religious ruin of the people, drawn as they are ever further from God, and led deeper into idolatry, superstition, and unbelief. Comp. ver. 12 in relation to ver. 11. In ver. 12 b, it is clearly indicated that men, through their estrangement from God and their immoral conduct, lose the power of voluntary self-determination, and become subject to a power, and evil "spirit," which they must follow, and, in the end, against their bitter feelings. Where such universal corruption obtains a spirit will prevail by which the individual is easily borne along with it (comp. also chap. v. 4).

2. Jehovah has a contest with Israel (ver. 1). The expression evidently rests upon the covenant-relation in which two parties assume obligations conditioned on both sides. Israel with God and God with Israel. The relation is therefore a legal one. The one party is bound only so long as the other fulfills his obligations; if one party does not fulfill them, the other may accuse him of an infringement of the compact and institute legal proceedings against him. Thus Jehovah has a "suit-at-law" with Israel, because the latter did not fulfill its obligations. In Joel iv. 2 the expression has a more general application to the judgment which God is to inflict upon the heathen; for they are also related to Jehovah as the Lord of the world. He will not be unjust with them, will not subject them to disadvantages, and will not do them injustice through his people; but they are not to infringe upon his rights, among which is his special relation to Israel. Attacking this, they attack Him also: hence this controversy with them. But alas! there is a dispute between Jehovah and his own people: instead of being united they are divided into two opposing parties. Because the land, shorn of fidelity, goodness, etc., is brought to shame through sin and infamous deeds (vers. 1, 2), it shall mourn and languish (ver. 3) — be visited by drought — as the punishment decreed by God. If this "languishing" is extended even to the unintelligent creation, such a dispensation would express not merely the extent and degree of the visitation, but would show the lower animals to be also included in the punishment. Man, as lord of creation, has by his sin brought punishment upon the rest of the animal world though these have not sinned, they must suffer with their master on account of his guilt. The punishment is elsewhere also set closely parallel to the guilt: in ver. 9 and especially in ver. 6: be

cause Israel has despised and forgotten God, He shall also despise and forget them. In particular, they show themselves unworthy of the high prerogative of being Jehovah's priest, to which they were really called as being the chosen people.

3. Between Israel and Judah there was always an important distinction morally and religiously. Hence the kingdom of Israel could be held before to the kingdom of Judah as a warning example. And this must be done : for it may easily be understood how the example of Israel was most dangerous to Judah. We feel clearly, when the Prophet utters the warning : " If thou dost commit whoredom, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty," how warmly his heart beats for Judah. He regards Judah not merely as a kingdom of kindred origin, but as the one which, after Israel's apostasy, represented alone the people of God, and thus he must all the more desire to have Judah preserved from Israel's ways. The position of a Prophet like Hosea, who was a citizen of the northern kingdom, was peculiar. In the discord that existed between Israel and Judah, such warm sympathy with the one would hardly be expected from a citizen of the other. But with a Prophet of Jehovah theocratic feelings, higher than natural ones, must prevail. In Judah was Jerusalem with the temple ; in Judah the House of David ruled ; Judah was always comparatively more faithful to God, and that was decisive. His heart must therefore turn towards Judah. He could regard the separation of Israel from Judah, partly in itself and partly on account of its disastrous consequences especially to Israel, which were so clearly manifested, only as something utterly false and unrighteous, as an act of injustice, and would behold the nation only in both kingdoms, so that the theocratic conception was in the deeper sense also the natural one. Yet in this he displayed his patriotism even in respect to his nearer home, just in his earnest testimony against the prevailing corruption, whose consequence he foresaw would be certain ruin. Hosea certainly does not expect this ruin to be averted, but only expects a religious and moral renovation through its influence, with which he could not but see the restoration of the national unity necessarily united. See further No. 4 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section on chaps. v. and vi.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

LUTHER : Ver. 1. Who will stand in the judgment in which he is accused by God ? For then it will be no argument of words as before an earthly judge, but we ourselves bring against ourselves the testimony of our consciences as our indictment. What is the source of this evil in the world, that nothing true is found, but everything is done from a false heart, and that nowhere can any evidence of honest kindness be seen ? The reason is, because there is no knowledge of God in the land, *i. e.*, because men despise God's Word.

[MATTHEW HENRY : Sin is the great mischief-maker : it sows discord between God and Israel : God's controversies will be pleaded ; pleaded by the judgments of his mouth before they are pleaded by the judgments of his hand, that He may be justified in all He doth, and may make it appear that He does not desire the death of sinners. And God's pleadings ought to be attended to, for sooner or later they shall have a hearing. — M.]

Ver 2. **WÜRT. SUMM. :** Faithfulness and sin-

cerity among a people are like great and precious jewels in a land. So also are paternal confidence and love and pure and faithful preachers of the Word of God. So there is no greater need than when these things are absent ; and especially when God's Word and pure teachers and preachers are wanting. This is the fountain of all evil. For God's Word keeps sin at a distance. Where it is not, or where it is not preached in its simplicity and purity, or men will not be reproved by it, nor follow it, nor amend their ways, there one blood-guiltiness and deadly sin follow after another, and all kinds of evil break in like a flood.

[PUSEY : Speculative and practical knowledge are bound up together, through the oneness of the relation of the soul to God, whether in its thoughts of Him or acts towards Him. Wrong practice corrupts belief, and misbelief corrupts practice. — M.]

Ver. 4. **LUTHER :** It is not so great an offense for men to sin as for them not to be willing to suffer the reproof of sin. For when they live in such a way as that their hearts have a horror of the cure of their malady, punishment can no longer delay. This sin is the most common of our time. Just look at Christian churches, and you will see everywhere that the teachers are hated for rebuking sin so freely. But this only excites God's wrath more fiercely against us. For not man but God rebukes and challenges the sinner.

Ver. 6. God will not be mocked. Men may reject God, but He is still beside them, and shows that He is there in his judgments. The self-deception of sin : in rejecting God (forgetting his commands) thou doest so as one who is rejected by Him.

[MATTHEW HENRY : Ignorance is so far from being the mother of devotion that it is the mother of destruction.

PUSEY : In an advanced stage of sin, men may come to forget what they once despised. — M.]

Ver. 8. There is nothing more shameful than to draw profit from the sin of our neighbor, and thus to strengthen him in his sin, or become the occasion of his sinning ; doubly shameful if we abuse our office and more exalted position to do so.

[PUSEY : What else is to extenuate or flatter sin than to dissemble it, not to see it, not openly to denounce it, lest we lose our popularity, or alienate those who commit it ? — M.]

[Ver. 9. MATTHEW HENRY : Sharers in sin must expect to be sharers in ruin. — M.]

[Ver. 10. PUSEY : Single marriage, according to God's law : " they twain shall be one flesh," yields in a nation a larger increase than polygamy. Illicit intercourse God turns to decay. His curse is upon it. — M.]

Ver. 11. **LUTHER :** These two vices, whoredom and debauchery, so take possession of a man that he does not know what he thinks, speaks, or does. The boy Cyrus in Xenophon admirably says, that wine is mixed with poison. And the saying of Archilochus, with reference to impure love, is well known : —

" Πολλὴν κατ' ἔρωσ ἀλλήλων ὀμμάτων ἔχεναι
Κλέψας ἐκ σπηθῶν ἀπαλὰς φρένας."

Comp. Luke xxi. 34 ; Eph. v. 18.

Ver. 12. **LUTHER :** The spirit of whoredom is that evil spirit which takes away from men's hearts true thoughts of God, and either perverts their hearts, or entirely subdues them by filling them with trust in the creature, which is true and sheer idolatry. For idolatry does not consist merely in

calling upon idols, but also in trust in our own righteousness, works, and service, in riches and human influence and power. And this, as it is the most common, is also the most harmful idolatry.

[PUSEY: The sins of the fathers descend very often to the children, both in the way of nature, that the children inherit strong temptations to their parents' sin, and by way of example, that they greedily imitate, often exaggerate them. Wouldst thou not have children which thou wouldst wish unborn, reform thyself. — M.]

Ver. 13. WÜRT. SUMM.: Corporeal and spiritual whoredom are commonly united, and mutually dependent. For how should he who does not abhor a departure from God through idolatry, abhor a life abandoned to fleshly lusts? For idolatry is a much greater sin than corporeal indulgence: the one offends against the first table of the law and against God Himself, but the other against the second table and our neighbor.

STARKE: When worship is performed in any other way than God has appointed, God is honored no longer, and idolatry is committed.

Ver. 14. Experience teaches that children are prone to imitate the shameful and unchaste lives of their parents. When such is the case the parents are most responsible; they deserve the chief punishment.

LUTHER: If God gives his Word to men, and they will not receive his instructions, what else should He do with them, than give them up to a reprobate mind, *i. e.*, let them live on according to their own counsel and pleasure, until they finally perish?

[CLARKE: While there is *hope*, there is *correction*.

PUSEY: To be chastened severely for lesser sins is a token of the great love of God toward us. To sin on without punishment is a token of God's extremest displeasure and a sign of reprobation. "Great is the offense, if, when thou hast sinned, thou art undeserving of the wrath of God." — M.]

Ver. 15. PFAFF. BIBELWERK: Ye pious and true believers, let not the ungodly seduce you to follow their steps, but beware of them lest ye also have part in their punishment. But ye sinners, if ye will go on sinning, do not seduce the innocent, and thus heap up the measure of your iniquities. Comp. Gal. v. 9.

[MATTHEW HENRY: The nearer we are to the infection of sin, the more need have we to stand upon our guard. Those that would be steady in their adherence to God must possess themselves with an awe and reverence of God, and always speak of Him with solemnity and seriousness; for those who can make a jest of the true God will make a god of anything. — M.]

Ver. 16. The Prophet employs this simile of a lamb in the desert, because nothing is more pitiable than a little lamb which has lost its shepherd. For the same reason Christ employs this figure of the lost sheep, when He would show the piteous condition of the sinner, and his great compassion towards him.

SCHMIEBER: He who will not submit to the restraints imposed by God, shall obtain a freedom which will at last become most irksome. This applies both to nations and to individuals.

[SCOTT: While sinners obstinately reject the easy yoke of Christ, they are bringing down the heavy load of his vengeance upon themselves.

PUSEY: Woe is it to that man, whom, when he withdraws from Christ's easy yoke, God permits to take the broad road which leadeth to destruction. — M.]

Ver. 19. STARKE: God does indeed bear with sinners in great patience and long-sufferings, and calls them to repentance; but when they do not amend, his punishment is swift. 1 Thess. v. 3.

[PUSEY: So does God, by healthful disappointment, make us ashamed of seeking out of Him those good things which He alone hath, and hath in store for them that love Him. — M.]

B. An Accusation especially against the Priests and the Royal House. The untheocratic Policy of the Kingdom of Israel in seeking for Help to Assyria and Egypt is denounced.

CHAPTERS V.—VII.

I. Mainly against the Priests.

CHAPTER V. 1-15.

- 1 Hear this ye Priests,
And give ear, thou House of Israel,
And listen, thou House of the King,
Because the judgment is for you,
And you have been a snare for Mizpah,
And a net spread upon Tabor.
- 2 And the apostates make slaughter¹ deep [are deeply sunk in slaughter],
And I am a chas²ming for them all.

- 3 I know Ephraim,
And Israel is not hidden from me ;
For even now hast thou committed whoredom, Ephraim,
Israel is defiled.
- 4 Their deeds will not suffer² (them)
To return to their God.
Because the spirit of. whoredom is in their inward parts [their inmost heart]
And they do not know Jehovah.
- 5 And the pride of Israel testifies to its face,
And Israel and Ephraim will totter, through their guilt,
And Judah will totter with them.
- 6 With their sheep and cattle
They will go to seek Jehovah,
But will not find Him ;
He hath withdrawn Himself from them.
- 7 They have been faithless to Jehovah,
For they begot strange children ;
Now the new moon will consume them
Together with their portions.
- 8 Blow the horn in Gibeah,
The trumpet in Ramah !
Cry out in Beth-Aven³
"Behind thee, O Benjamin !"
- 9 Ephraim will become a waste
In the day of chastisement,
Among the tribes of Israel
Have I made known what is sure.
- 10 The princes of Judah have become
Like the removers of land-marks :
I will pour out upon them
My wrath like water.
- 11 Ephraim is oppressed,
Shattered by judgment,⁴
For it thought good
To follow idol-images.⁴
- 12 And I (am) like the moth to Ephraim
And like rottenness to the house of Judah.
- 13 And Ephraim saw its disease,
And Judah its wound,
And Ephraim went to Assyria,
And sent to the warlike monarch ;
But he will not be able to heal for you,
And will not remove your wound.
- 14 For I am like the lion to Ephraim,
And like the young lion to the house of Judah,
I, I will rend and go on (rending)
Will carry away and there will be no deliverer
- 15 I will go again to my place,
Until they make expiation (by suffering),
And seek my face ;
In their distress they will seek me.

CHAPTER VI. 1-11.

- 1 "Come let us return⁵ to Jehovah !
For He hath torn, and will heal us,
He hath smitten and will bind us up.
- 2 He will revive us after two days,
On the third day He will raise us up,
That we may live before Him.

- 3 Let us know, follow on to know, Jehovah :
Like the dawn his coming is sure,
And He shall come like the rain for us,
Like the latter rain (which) waters the earth.*
- 4 What shall I do to thee, Ephraim ?
What shall I do to thee, Judah ?
For your love is like the morning cloud,
And like the dew, vanishing soon away.
- 5 Therefore I have smitten⁶ (them) through the Prophets,
And slain them with the words of my mouth,
And my judgment goes forth like light.⁶
- 6 For I delight in love and not sacrifice,
And in the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
- 7 Yet they, like Adam, have broken the covenant,
They were faithless to me then.
- 8 Gilead is (like) a city of evil-doers,
Besmeared with blood.
- 9 And as the robber lurks,⁷
So (does) a band of priests.
Upon the highway they murder (those going) to Schechem,
Yea they commit wickedness.
- 10 In the house of Israel
I beheld an abomination, a horror :
Ephraim committed whoredom,
Israel (is) defiled.
- 11 For thee, also, Judah, a harvest is prepared,⁸
When I turn the captivity of my people.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 2. — וַיַּעֲשׂוּ is probably the Inf. Piel from עָשָׂה . [It is the inf. absol. with ו paragogic. The regular form would be וַיַּעֲשׂוּ , but the Kamets-Hathuph is changed to Patach. See Green, *Gr.*, § 119, 3. Its construction with the finite verb follows a peculiar idiom, common in Hebrew. The literal translation is: they have made deep to slaughter. Comp. Is. xxxi. 6. Ewald, comparing with ix. 9, holds that our word is a false reading for וַיַּעֲשׂוּ , but there is no reason why the Prophet should not have used both expressions. — M.]

[2 Ver. 4. — E. V. and most Anglo-American expositors adopt another construction in the first hemistich, rendering: they will not frame their doings. Horsley, with the best Continental critics, prefers the rendering which is given in the margin of E. V. and adopted by Schmoller. Pusey is undecided, and indeed it is difficult to determine which is the true view; for no importance is to be attached to the objection of Henderson, that וַיַּעֲשׂוּ would require an object expressed if the construction last referred to were the correct one. — M.]

3 Ver. 8. — Before וַיַּעֲשׂוּ supply $\text{וְ$.

4 Ver. 11. — $\text{וְ$ is in the construct. state before וַיַּעֲשׂוּ . It is not = broken, harassed in law, which is unsuitable here, but we have a *genitivus efficientis*, and וַיַּעֲשׂוּ = judgment, as in ver. 1: crushed by judgment. On the combination וַיַּעֲשׂוּ , see Ewald, § 285, 6. The words are coördinate. [See Green, § 269. This construction is frequent in Hosea; comp. i. 6; vi. 4. — M.] Fürst takes $\text{וְ$ in our passage = $\text{וְ$, a pillar, especially a finger-post. He, however, has the conjecture that it = $\text{וְ$, filth, dirt, and this = $\text{וְ$, idols, and would trace וְ from וְ , to be foolish (of which the Niphal occurs) = he was foolish, and followed after filth (filthy idol-worship). A further conjecture is that it may be an Ephraimitish mode of writing וְ (Job xv 81) = nothing, vanity. LXX.: ὁπίσω τῶν ματαίων .

[5 Chap. vi. ver. 1-3. — The true construction of the various sentences in these verses is probably as follows: The first line of ver. 1 contains an exhortation, the remainder of that and the following verse consisting of arguments in support of it; and the first line of ver. 3 contains a parallel exhortation, followed in the remainder of the verse, by parallel arguments. A glance at the verses in their connection will show the appropriateness of this general view. That the opposite is true of the construction adopted in E. V. and by the English expositors generally, according to which the opening of ver. 3 is regarded as a continuation of the reasons for returning, is evident both from the unsuitness of that line as an argument, and from the consideration that all the pleas adduced in all three verses are drawn from expectations of favor from God Himself. The form of the Heb. pret. (with ו paragogic) here employed, also confirms this view. But there is no need of holding, according to the view preferred by Schmoller, that any of the intermediate verbs introduce an exhortation. This both weakens the force of the array of pleas successively adduced and mars the regular and beautiful structure of the section. $\text{וְ$ (ver. 1), $\text{וְ$ and $\text{וְ$ (ver. 3), therefore, being paragogic futures (Green, §§ 97, 1. 234), are cohortatives, and the only cohortatives in the section — M.]

6 Ver. 5. — The object of **חֲזַבְתִּי** is to be supplied by anticipation from **הַרְגֵּתִים**. Instead of **וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ**, **אֵלֶּךְ**, the punctuation and division of the words is probably to be changed according to the ancient versions, and **וּמִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ** to be read. The Masoretic reading is encumbered with too many difficulties.

7 Ver. 9. — **חֲזִי** is for **חֲזִיָּה** = **חֲזִיָּה** [constr. inf. Piel, equivalent to a participial noun. It is an imitation of the Chaldee. Henderson conjectures that the form is for **חֲזִיָּה**, Piel. Part. — **חֲזִיָּה**. The translation of E. V.: by consent, has arisen from the Targum rendering, **כְּתִיבָהּ**: one shoulder. This view is now almost altogether abandoned. — M.]

8 Ver. 11. — **שָׂתָר** is used impersonally, being equivalent to a passive sense [one sets, prepares a harvest = a harvest is prepared. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

The beginning in ver. 1 (corresponding to the opening of chap. iv.) shows that the discourse here commences anew. Though connected with chap. iv., this chapter contains an accusation and threatening more definitely directed against the priests along with the king and his counsellors and princes, yet without being confined to this, for the discourse again becomes general, applying to the whole people. Along with idolatry which here again becomes prominent as the sin of Israel (especially in chap. v.) and gross sins among the people (deceit, robbery, murder, chap. vi.), the conduct of the court is afterwards specially reproved, but particularly the false policy of seeking help in Assyria and Egypt (which itself presupposes the beginning of the kingdom's decay). Chap. vi. is inseparably connected with chap. v. But chap. vii. is also related to both of them, for a new section begins only with chap. viii. (See Introduction.) A single central and controlling idea, however, can hardly be indicated in these two chapters, or in the second part of the book generally. The discourse is too excited, moving suddenly from one thought to another, especially from accusation to threatening, and *vice versa*.

Ver. 1. Hear this, ye priests. It is doubtful whether **זֶה** refers to the foregoing, but it is not improbable that it does. The solemn discourse just ended would now be applied to the hearts of those specially addressed here, and the continuation of the discourse would then be attached to it. House of the king = the royal family, or possibly those who surrounded him ordinarily. The king referred to cannot be with certainty determined. Keil conjectures Zachariah or Menahem, or both. According to 2 Kings xv. 19 f. the resort to Assyria would suit Menahem better than Zachariah. For the judgment is for you. This refers specially, according to the sequel, to the Priests and the Court. ["The judgment" is that announced in the preceding chapter; the special application is made here. — M.] The rulers of the people are compared to a snare and net. The birds whom they have taken or allured to destruction, are the people. Mizpah cannot be the Mizpah strictly so called in the tribe of Benjamin, but must be = **מִצְפָּה** and that = **מִצְפָּה** in elevated place in Gilead, perhaps identical with

מִצְפָּה in the tribe of Dan. Tabor, on this side the Jordan, would correspond to the elevated point on the other side. These two places are probably selected as prominent points to represent the whole country; for it is not known that they were places of sacrifice. Keil conjectures

that they are chosen in this image because they were places suitable for bird-catching.

Ver. 2. **וְהַעֲמִיקוּ**, to make deep. Literally: they have made slaughter deep = they have sunk deep in it. Slaughter might of itself be understood as murder, but the thought is carried further. **שָׁחַט** is usually employed of the slaughter of beasts for sacrifice, and thus is most suitable here according to the foregoing, where the evil influence of the rulers upon the nation is spoken of, and this consisted in the idolatry which they saw them practice. But this sacrificing is intentionally called only slaying, and suggested by it. **שָׁחַט** a *ἀπ.* *ἀπ.* is uncertain. The most probable explanation makes it = **שָׁחַט**, apostates. This is then the subject of the sentence, which would be rendered: the apostates are deeply sunk in murder. Keil, with others, takes it quite differently: transgressions, more literally: deviations. He explains **שָׁחַט** after **שָׁחַט**, 1 Kings x. 16 f.: to stretch, stretch along; therefore: deviations; they have made deep to stretch out = they have carried their transgressions very far. But what a tortuous mode of expression: to stretch out deviations! [The Anglo-American Commentators generally adopt the former view, rendering: revolters, or: apostates. — M.]

Ver. 3. The second half of this verse tells what God discerns in Ephraim and Israel. **עֵינֶיךָ** now, at this very moment, pointing out, as an actual fact, that which at present lies open to the eye of God. [Henderson: "To express an assertion more strongly, the Hebrews put it first in the form of an affirmative, and afterwards in the form of a negative." — M.]

Ver. 4. Their deeds will not allow, etc. Their works stand in the way of their returning to God; for they are not isolated things, but are the expression of their inner nature, and that is held securely by the spirit of whoredom (iv. 12), as by a demoniacal power which has stifled the knowledge of God. They are therefore not free — not lords over themselves, but slaves. [The rendering adopted here is that given in the margin of the English Bible, and approved by the majority of the Expositors of Continental Europe, ancient and modern, and by Horsley among the English ones. But there he stands alone, all other Anglo-American translators adopting the rendering: they will not frame their doings to return to the Lord. They have been led to this view by the mistaken notion that the other translation involved a grammatical impossibility. See Gram. Note. — M.]

Ver. 5. The pride of Israel according to some, denotes God, as One in whom Israel might have

pride. The sense would then be that God, by his judgments testifies in the very face of Israel. But such an explanation is forced. The natural impression, on reading the words, is rather that Israel and its conduct is spoken of. Therefore the words are to be taken as they stand; the pride of Israel testifies to its face, namely, when the punishment of such pride is being suffered. It will be then felt what it is to reject Jehovah in presumptuous self-reliance (Wünsche). Judah also totters with them. In iv. 15 Judah is warned not to be partaker in Israel's guilt; but this must have been done because such participation was already begun, or foreseen as about to be assumed. On the other hand in i. 7 Judah's destiny is distinguished definitely from that of Israel. [Henderson and others account for this seeming discrepancy by assuming that this chapter was written at a period considerably subsequent to that of the utterance of the last. But the evidence of the connection between them is too strong to admit of this supposition. The solution given above is therefore probably the correct one. — M.]

Ver. 6. They shall go with their flocks and with their herds. The fruitlessness of Israel's sacrifices without a mind answering to the offering, is here shown (comp. vi. 6; Is. i. 11 ff.; Jer. vii. 21 ff.; Ps. xl. 7; 1. 8 ff.).

Ver. 7. נָאֵץ, to act faithlessly, especially of the infidelity of a wife to her husband. The proof (נָאֵץ) of such unfaithfulness of Israel to Jehovah, the Husband, is then given. Instead of bearing children to God in covenant with Him, they had rather, by their illicit intercourse with idols, begotten strange, illegitimate children, children not belonging to the household, i. e., children whom the Lord cannot acknowledge as his own. The punishment is then announced: The new moon will devour them. "The new moon is the festal season on which sacrifices were offered, and is here employed for the sacrifices themselves. The meaning is: your festal sacrifices are so far from bringing deliverance as rather to induce your ruin" (Keil). The sentence must, at the same time, be understood in a temporal sense = the time will soon come when they will perish, as also appears clearly from ver. 8. Their portions are their possessions, part of which they brought as offerings.

Ver. 8. The judgment is seen in the Spirit as being already inflicted. The invasion of the enemy is to be announced by the horn and the trumpet. Gibeah and Ramah were most suitable for giving signals on account of their lofty situation. Both were on the northern boundary of Benjamin. Thus Judah is already menaced (see ver. 5), and Israel actually occupied. הִרְעִי, to raise a shout = to sound the alarm in danger. Beth-aven again = Bethel; פֶּה, is to be supplied. Behind thee, Benjamin. The danger which is signaled, the enemy, is coming. He is already close behind thee.

Ver. 9. Israel shall assuredly be destroyed, and permanently also: נֶאֱמָרָה = enduring, that is, lasting misfortune (comp. Deut. xxviii. 59). Others make it = true, what will surely be fulfilled. [The latter view is preferable, and is approved by most expositors. — M.]

Ver. 10. Like the removers of landmarks. Is this to be taken literally? It is certain that we are not to think of hostile seizures of the territory

of Israel, but the *tertium comp.* is the curse which, according to Deut. xxvii. 17, is laid upon the removal of a neighbor's landmark = they have done something worthy of cursing. The curse attending the removal of the landmarks must therefore be regarded here as something well known. The question then arises: what is it that they have done incurring a curse. Keil and Hengstenberg think that a spiritual removal of boundaries is indicated, a subversion of the bounds of justice, namely, by participating in the guilt of Ephraim which they did by breaking down the barriers between Jehovah and the idols. And it is true that the princes of Judah are to be regarded as in a special sense divided off as against Israel and its idolatry, by virtue of the true faith which still prevailed in Judah as contrasted with Israel. The sense would then be: The princes of Judah, by their favoring idolatry, by this transgressing of spiritual limits, have become like those who remove the land-marks of fields, and thus become subject to the curse. God's anger will seize upon them like a full stream of water. Comp. Ps. lxxix. 25; lxxix. 6; Jer. x. 25.

Vers. 11–15 declare that even Assyria cannot help, and that the vanity of all help outside of God, drives Israel to Him.

Ver. 11. וְשֹׁנֵן וְרֵעִי are "united also in Deut. xxviii. 33 to denote the complete subjugation of Israel under enemies in the event of apostasy from God" (Keil). וְרֵעִי occurs only here and in Is. xxviii. 10. In the latter case, at all events it = מִצְוָה, command. So many here also: a human statute ["in contrast to the ordinances of God"] alluding to the worship of calves (Keil). [See Textual note.]

Ver. 12. A moth and rottenness are symbols of destroying influences. The moth is alluded to in the same way in Is. i. 9; li. 8; Ps. xxxix. 12; both united in Job xiii. 28. Such influences also destroy slowly but surely: *Certa Dei judicia* (Calvin).

Ver. 13. וְהָלִי וְהָיָה, injury and wound, hardly denote religious and moral depravation (Keil); for it would scarcely have been said that Ephraim perceived this, but the judgment of God mentioned in ver. 12, which according to the image there employed is not one which brings sudden ruin, but a more secret corruption, of which, indeed, moral depravation forms a part, but only as a judgment of God. That a divine judgment is intended, is clear from what is said of the vanity of help that is sought, especially in the sequel, and from the ground assigned for its insufficiency in ver. 14. Assyria is here named for the first time. In the subsequent chapters the Prophet frequently recurs to the false policy of seeking help from Assyria. Only Ephraim is named because Israel is the main subject. Judah is referred to only incidentally. וְהָיָה, a contender, an epithet devised by the Prophet to denote the Assyrian king.

Ver. 14. They can as little defend themselves from God's judgments as they can from the attack of lions. (Comp. xiii. 7; Is. v. 29; Deut. xxxii. 39).

Ver. 15. The figure of the lion is continued. As the lion, without fear of being attacked, withdraws into his lair, so the Lord withdraws into heaven; none can or dare call Him to account Until they make expiation = suffer. The וְהָיָה

fering shall drive them to God. שֶׁחַר = seek earnestly. Comp. ii. 9 and Deut. iv. 29, 30, where comp. also the expression בִּצְרָר לֵךְ.

Chap. vi. ver. 1. Come let us return to Jehovah. The words are plainly connected with the last words of chap. v. where a seeking of God on the part of the people is mentioned as the aim and consequence of the divine judgment. The opinion is, therefore, the most natural (so already the LXX.) that they are just the expression of that seeking, that in them Israel announces its resolve, and immediately thereafter the hope of favor on the ground of the return. The view of Keil is less suitable, that we have here an exhortation addressed by the Prophet in the name of God to the people whom God has smitten. The words are only and naturally put in the mouths of those who, punished for their sins, would return to God. [The Anglo-American Commentators, generally, adopt the view here advocated. Henderson gives the additional plea that the bearing of ver. 5 favors the hypothesis. — M.] For He hath torn, etc. (comp. v. 14). Strong faith. The Lord who had spoken with such threatenings, and such implacable severity, would yet give salvation (and not Assyria, ver. 13). This would also be true if the words וִירָפְאוּנוּ, וִירָבִשְׁנוּ are taken as expressing a wish, which is readily suggested by a frequent usage of ל with the future: and may He heal us, etc. (so also in the following sentences). —

כִּי. The resolve to return would then be strengthened by the calamity which God sends. If וִירָבִשְׁנוּ be taken not as expressing a wish but simply a hope the determination to return would rather be strengthened by this hope, as the healing, etc., would be the fruit of the return. [On the grammatical and logical connection of the different clauses of the first three verses, see Gram. note. — M.] An allusion to Deut. xxxii. 39 can hardly be mistaken, especially if we look to ver. 2.

Ver. 2. He will revive us again, etc. The definite limits: two days, and: on the third day, hold out the prospect of the speedy and sure revival of Israel. "Two and three days are very short periods of time; and the linking of two numbers following the one upon the other, expresses the certainty of what is to take place within the period named, just as in the so-called *number-sayings* in Amos i. 3; Job v. 19; Prov. vi. 16; xxx. 15, 18, in which the last and greatest number expresses the highest or utmost extent of the matter dealt with" (Keil). Both the Rabbinical interpretations of these numbers (*e. g.*, that they relate to the three captivities, the Egyptian, the Babylonish, and the Roman) and the Christian, according to which Christ's resurrection on the third day is indicated, are naturally inadmissible. The latter is excluded even by the words themselves. Israel is the subject of discourse: "it is torn, smitten, slain"; nothing is said of the exile itself, but in general there is set forth the termination of its existence as a people through the divine judgment (which to be sure was brought to pass by means of the exile). Israel expects, in the event of conversion, to be delivered from this situation and to be restored, and that speedily. It is naturally not the awakening of the physically dead that is announced; but it is a significant fact, that such an awakening is employed to illustrate the restoration of Israel, for it may lead us to infer that such a belief lay not far from the Prophet's mind. Comp.

for our verse, Is. xxxvi. 19 ff. (and for the whole section, vers. 16–21), and especially the well-known vision in Ez. xxxvii. 1–14. (See further No. 4 in the Doctrinal section.) [Comp. the remarks of Delitzsch on Job xix. 25 ff. in his *Commentary* on that book, which contain the true principle of interpretation in such cases, and substantially agree with the method approved by Schmoller here. Henderson and Cowles agree in excluding any but an historic allusion, while Horsley and Pusey maintain the allegorical interpretation, the former seeing a "no very obscure, though but an oblique, allusion to our Lord's resurrection on the third day," the latter repudiating any other application, and carrying out the analogy to the extreme possibilities of fanciful conjecture. The explanation of the two and three days given above is probably the true one. With it Newcome and Henderson agree. Cowles suggests an allusion to the duration of the pestilence in Israel after David's census of the people, and thinks that besides there "may be a tacit allusion to the fact that three days is about the extent of human endurance under extreme privations and hardships." — M.] That we may live before Him: "under his protecting shelter and favor, comp. Gen. xvii. 18" (Keil).

Ver. 3. Let us know, pursue the knowledge of, Jehovah. Keil rightly makes the verse parallel with ver. 1, as a further appeal. The expression יִדְּבֹק especially indicates an appeal, or, according to our view, a self-exhortation. The zeal and earnestness of the return is thus presented. "Know" must be taken in the sense of iv. 1, 6. Jehovah had become an unknown, a strange God to the (idolatrous) people. Such knowledge has thus a practical aim, to acknowledge, to serve Him. The following words declare what is hoped for as the fruit of that knowledge: His coming forth is sure like the dawn, etc. Jehovah will appear bringing salvation. This is set forth under the figures of the daybreak and a fertilizing rain. The appearing of Jehovah is denoted as a rising by the image of the dawn (צֹפֵר, usually employed of the sun). The transition from night to day is set forth. Comp. Is. lviii. 8. And He will come as the rain for us, etc., *i. e.*, reviving and refreshing. "In Deut. xi. 14 (comp. xxviii. 12 and Lev. xxvi. 4, 5), the rain, or the early and latter rain, is mentioned among the blessings which the Lord will bestow upon his people if they shall serve Him with the whole heart. This promise the Lord will so fulfill in the case of his newly-revived people, that He himself will refresh them like a fertilizing rain" (Keil).

Ver. 4. What shall I do to thee, Ephraim? It is common to break off the discourse here, wrongly, with ver. 3. It is supposed that there is here a first section containing a promise, to which the promise in chaps. xi. and xiv. correspond, and that a new section begins in ver. 4 with a new ob-jurgatory discourse (Keil). But, in the first place, vers. 1–3 do not really contain a promise of the Prophet, or of God through the Prophet, but only a hope of the people themselves. And, in the second place, ver. 4 is too closely connected with the preceding (not as a promise of God attached to the foregoing), according to Luther's translation. how will I do thee good, etc.? For עֲשֶׂה does not mean: to do good, and יִרְפֶּךָ is not = the mercy which I will show you, and, especially, the comparison of God's favor to the morning cloud and

the vanishing dew would be unsuitable. The words rather contain a bitter complaint of Israel's inconstancy, and that suggested just by the preceding words. A good and joyful feeling was there expressed. If Israel only had now such a feeling as was expressed in the words which the Prophet puts in their mouth, all would be well! But Israel is as inconstant as God is constant. Its goodness is as the morning cloud and the swiftly vanishing dew. Both the dew and the morning cloud are figures of evanescence. The dew has an allusion to the rain, with which Jehovah is compared by way of contrast; and the morning cloud disappearing so soon, points back to the dawn which surely brings the day. **חֶסֶד**, love, is naturally, on account of God's complaint against the inconstancy of the people, to be understood of love towards God. Yet it may also be taken generally, and made to include man's love to his neighbor as well. What shall I do to thee? = how shall I further punish thee? Then follows what God would yet do.

Ver. 5. Therefore—because the character of Israel was such as was described in ver. 4. The words of my mouth is parallel to the Prophets, because the latter proclaimed God's purposes; and the **נִבֵּן** was performed by the prophets just so far as they uttered the words of God. **הִצַּב**, to hew out or off. The figure is that of hard stone or wood to which, by hewing, the right shape is given, and obdurate Israel is conceived of as having been subjected to such treatment for its good through the oburgations of the prophets. Similarly Luther after Jerome: to plane off.—The expression of the second member is stronger still: I slew them. A slaying influence is ascribed to God's word. He gives to the prophets to announce death and ruin. In the words that follow we are probably to change the reading, and translate = and my judgment (goes forth) as light. [See Textual note. — M.] The image may have been chosen with reference to ver. 4: Since your love is like the morning cloud and the dew, vanishing quickly, when the sun rises, I will make such a sun rise as you do not wish. The judgment is here compared to a sunrise, which is elsewhere rather an image of a gracious visitation (comp. ver. 3), perhaps in the sense that judgment reveals sins, the works of darkness, in their true light (comp. Eph. v. 13).

Ver. 6 and the following ones confirm more definitely what is said in ver. 5. What God wishes is love and the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God (= piety here) goes back to the essential idea of **יָדָע** as embracing in its general sense, love to God and man, though the latter here preponderates. In this sense Jesus cites it in Matt. ix. 13; xii. 7. On the meaning, comp. No. 5 in the Doctrinal and Ethical section.

Ver. 7. Yet the conduct of the people is just the opposite of what God desires. But they, like Adam, have broken the covenant. The reference is to Ephraim and Judah, not to the priests. And, therefore, **אֲנָשִׁים** does not express a contrast to these = ordinary men. It would rather indicate a contrast to Ephraim and Judah as the people of God. But this thought is quite remote. Viewing the passage without prejudice, the usual explanation is seen to be the most natural: like Adam. Allusion is thus made to Gen. iii. Adam's sin was the violation of a covenant: for with the command

laid upon Adam, God entered into a relation with him, which, in accordance with the analogies of later agreements made with mankind, might be called a covenant. Such covenant-breaking is a

בְּגֵד, a breach of fidelity. Then they were unfaithful to Me, as it were, pointing with the finger to the well-known places of idolatrous worship, e. g., Bethel. Israel's position, therefore, is one of apostasy from God. Israel contradicts its destiny, which was, to be God's people. In fact, the verse expresses the want of that one thing which God desires, the want of the "knowledge of God." Being a condition of intimacy with God, it is lost in apostasy from Him. Therefore, also, there is no

הִיָּסָר ver. 8 ff. [Newcome, Pusey, and Cowles prefer the interpretation that understands Adam to be meant. Henderson rejects it, and prefers the rendering: they (are) like men (who) break a covenant. To this it might be objected, first, that this, which is in any case, a paraphrase, is not the natural translation of the words. If it were the author's meaning, every reader, contemporary with him or otherwise, would have mistaken it, on the first view, at least. In the second place, such a periphrastic expression would be a very feeble, as well as unusual, way of conveying the notion that they had broken God's covenant, in marked contrast to the directness of the charge in the second member of the verse. He objects to the other view that nowhere is there mention made of God's entering into a covenant with Adam. But this objection is not valid if it appears that the transaction in which God and Adam were the parties was really of the nature of a covenant. And that term "is a concise and correct mode of asserting a plain Scriptural fact, namely, that God made to Adam a promise suspended upon a condition, and attached to disobedience a certain penalty. This is what in Scriptural language is meant by a covenant." (Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, vol. ii. p. 117.) His other objection is trivial, that with the exception of three doubtful passages, of which the present is one, Adam is not used in the Old Testament after the first chapter of Genesis (he probably meant the fifth) as a proper name, nor is any reference made to our first parents. The nearest parallel to our passage is Job xxxi. 33: if I have concealed my transgression like Adam; of the correctness of which rendering there can be no reasonable doubt. Comp. Delitzsch on that passage in his *Commentary on Job*. — M.]

Ver. 8. Gilead might be taken here as the name of a city. But it never occurs as such, only as the name of a district on the east of the Jordan. It must therefore be assumed that the name of the district is applied here to the chief city, Mizpah. Or we might remain by the notion of the district, and the expression would then be a comparison = All Gilead is, as it were, a city of evil-doers, as full of them as a city is of men. — **עַלְמָה** **עַלְמָה** is a foot-mark, therefore: tracked with blood, full of bloody tracks. Here murderous actions are indicated without being definitely named.

Ver. 9. But the most shameful transactions occur in the west of the Jordan. Even priests act like robbers. **בָּדָד** is a predatory band, a band of freebooters or robbers, therefore **אִישׁ בָּדָדִים** = a companion of such bands, a robber. Like the lurking of robbers = as robbers lurk, so lurk a company of priests, they murder on the way to Shechem. Travellers are surprised by them

on the way to Shechem. Shechem was a City of Refuge. Perhaps those are meant who sought refuge there. The priests are by many thought to be residents of Shechem. But Shechem was a Levitical, not a sacerdotal, city. The expression would then refer not to those dwelling within the city, but to those without, who fall upon persons going to Shechem. Bethel was rather the seat of the priests. Keil therefore supposes: "The way to Shechem is mentioned as a place of murders and bloody deeds, because the road to Bethel, the principal seat of worship belonging to the ten tribes, from Samaria the capital, and in fact from the northern part of the kingdom generally, lay through this city. Pilgrims to the feasts for the most part took this road; and the priests, who were taken from the dregs of the people, appear to have lain in wait for them, to rob, or, in case of resistance, to murder." More strictly speaking, it must have been done on the return from Bethel to Shechem. The allusion is evidently to a definite event unknown to us. The same remark applies

to the following words. **שִׁבְרָה** is climactic. **חֲשִׁיבָה** = shame, perhaps, unchastity. [This word does not mean shame or dishonor. It is primarily a device or plan either evil or good (comp. Job xvii. 11), though usually the former. The next meaning is wickedness; then specially a crime resulting from unchastity. For the connection between the two meanings see Lev. xviii. 11. — M.]

Ver. 10. The consequences of the preceding. Probably both corporeal and spiritual whoredom are included.

Ver. 11. A threatening is appended against Judah also. "Judah also" is guilty. The harvest is as elsewhere an image of judgment, a cutting down (comp. also Is. xxviii. 24 ff.) When I shall turn the captivity of my people. This appears, on the contrary, to refer to a deliverance, and therefore to be a promise. But it must be remembered that the judgment has for its aim the deliverance of God's people (**עַמִּי**) as a whole. But such deliverance is effected only through the judgment that falls upon the several parts, first upon Israel and then upon Judah. The meaning therefore is, when Israel, the Ten Tribes, shall have received its punishment and been restored, Judah also will be punished. [This paraphrase of the passage does not agree with historical fact, and must therefore be rejected. The true view seems to be that

of Keil: "**שִׁבְרָה**" never means: to bring back the captives, but in every passage where it occurs simply: to turn the captivity and that in the figurative sense of *restitutio in integrum*. 'My people,' i. e., the people of Jehovah is not Israel of the Ten Tribes but the covenant nation as a whole. Consequently 'the captivity of my people' is the misery into which Israel (of the twelve tribes) had been brought through its apostasy from God, not the Assyrian or Babylonian Exile, but the misery brought about by the sins of the people. God could avert this only by judgments, through which the ungodly were destroyed and the penitent converted. Consequently the following is the thought which we obtain from the verse: When God shall come to punish that He may root out ungodliness, and restore his people to their true destiny, Judah will also be visited with the judgment." — M.] The whole is not to be regarded as a promise, or the harvest as a harvest of joy. Nor is it necessary to attract the second hemistich of ver. 11 to the first verse of chap. vii. (e. g., Meier).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Prophetic rebuke does not merely not spare rulers and kings: it is specially directed against them. This follows from the conviction of the high vocation the monarchy had to fulfill. It is the bearer of the magisterial office, and as such must administer and guard the divine law, and must therefore care both for the purity of God's worship and the administration of justice. And if it neglects or directly violates its obligation, despises the divine law, and even introduces idolatry, perverts justice, exercises injustice or leaves it unpunished, it becomes recreant to God, from whom it receives its authority, and incurs his punishment. This, the Prophet, as God's messenger, announces, and his voice is therefore at first a voice of warning in order to bring it back to the true path. But the Prophet arraigns not merely neglect or violation of the obligations entailed by the office as such, but also the personal conduct of the bearers of the office, with a due appreciation of the influence which they exercise by word and still more by deed, in virtue of their high position.

2. "In all inroads of sin and corruption we are to look not merely at the outward work, but at the power of darkness, the spirit, that lies behind as their most dexterous and astute controlling influence, which will maintain most craftily its right and cause; comp. ver. 4" (Rieger).

3. RIEGER: "So long as man under divine chastisement, supposes that he can find help and mitigate his misfortunes by trust in the creatures, he wanders off as though in a trackless wilderness, from the living fountain, and might preclude himself from the most essential self-humbling, the knowledge of his guilt. But when God presses upon him with his hand and he has no deliverer, then is quickened in his heart a little seed implanted there before by God's good hand; and thus the love of God is like a man who has sown seed in his land; he goes away to his place, and depends on that which the seed will produce in time, and after the rough winter." Most beautiful is the believing assurance with which the Prophet makes the chastened express their hope of favor if they should return to God. (This same hope is expressed in Dent. xxxii. 39.) Thus restoration after past destruction is hoped for, and the blessedness of this restoration is further and happily described by comparing the returning favor of God to the rising dawn and the descending rain of harvest, as beneficent and refreshing as the one, as fertilizing and fraught with as rich blessings as the other, it spreads its influence. Such a visitation of mercy was most fully vouchsafed through the Messiah; He was the Day-star from on high; in Him came to us the Son of God in the flesh to diffuse upon us the Holy Spirit like fertilizing rain. He brings, therefore, the true healing for the bruised, the true binding up of the wounds for the smitten, the true reviving for the slain — all under the condition (presupposed by the Prophet) of a penitent returning to God. That the Prophet himself, in putting these words into the mouths of the penitent, thought of the Messiah, can not be maintained. We must apply here also canon laid down at chaps. i.-ii. that the fulfillment took place under the Messiah, but in another and higher sense than the Prophet fancied, that the words inspired by the Spirit of God had a further range than the Prophet knew. The "revival" and the "upraising" imply primarily a restoration of Is

rael, and we have in Ez. xxxvii. 1-14 the completed picture of which our short sentence affords the outlines. But if the true restoration of God's people has been and is now being accomplished only through Christ, we can go a step further, and show that the revival, proceeding from Him, which is essentially a partaking in a new spiritual life, finds its completion only in the awakening even from corporeal death to the enjoyment of eternal life, of those who have been spiritually quickened by Him. If we, therefore, from the stand-point of the New Testament, find in the words of our Prophet here an allusion to this, we are not really so far wrong as might seem. Nay, as the Prophet certainly speaks of a reviving in a spiritual sense, so he must take that image from an actual revival of the dead, as he took the preceding ones in ver. 1 from the binding and healing of a wound, and this idea cannot be so remote from his language, even if we can say no more (Isaiah in xxvi. 19 evidently goes further). As regards the specification of time: on the third day, which so naturally suggests Christ's resurrection, — the coincidence is certainly not accidental so far as the resurrection on the third day is to be regarded as a rising in "a very brief space of time." He was, indeed, to die, but not to remain in the state of the dead any longer than was necessary, so to speak, in order to make his death an indubitable fact; rather, as the "First Fruits," He should be soonest brought out of death by the mighty working of the Father, and it would thus be shown how completely God's wrath, borne by Him, was quenched, and God's favor restored. On the third day the sun of mercy thus rose even here. And upon this revival of the Messiah on the third day, is conditioned the revival of sinners, proceeding from Him, in time and eternity. We must, therefore, regard this passage of prophecy as at least significant from a New Testament stand-point, nor do we err if we say, that there is here contained more than the Prophet could conceive; it is a divine word resembling a seed of corn which does not simply represent what it actually is (even the most precious stone does no more than this), but conceals in itself something else far higher, the germ which it enfolds.

4. Chap. vi. 5. There is expressed here a clear consciousness of the aim and lofty position of prophecy. It is above all not something incidental, but is embraced organically in the divine economy. Its special mission is fulfilled when the people of God forget their calling, and disregarding the voice of their own conscience, no longer seize the true path, and, having already inwardly apostatized, attain only to weak resolves, which are never fulfilled (ver. 4). Then God appears before his people, and sends them the prophets, who are, so to speak, a conscience standing outside of them. Through them He speaks the "words of his mouth" and rebukes his people. He announces through them his judgment; their words of rebuke themselves are a punishment to the people, at all events, a punishment by words before the punishment by deeds is sent, but yet essentially identical with it, inasmuch as it was intended to produce deep sorrow, to touch the inner man, and to bring painfully to the consciousness criminal apostasy from God, and has thus the same aim as actual punishment has. Thus the sending of the prophets appears in one passage as a punishment; therefore also the expression which speaks of God's newing and slaying through them is employed, and there is conjoined with it in one line the "ris-

ing of judgment like the sun," which may be understood of the efficiency of the prophets themselves. It is declared in such passages as xii. 11 that prophecy had in itself a more general significance, as it effected God's revelation to the people, and brought Him into close relations with them, and was, in so far, an element of his dispensation of mercy. And, apart from this, as Hosea directly shows, it had not only a legal but also an evangelical aspect by its vocation as proclaiming God's faithfulness, in virtue of which He had not rejected his people but had destined for them a great deliverance. Here, however, it is occupied with the race for which it was specially designed, and for them it preached punishment by holding up before them the law they had so contemptuously violated; it became a chastening rod through the Word, and it was to hold out to the people the prospect of the future salvation only through the medium of punishment, and must as its main duty "cut to pieces" and "slay." The preaching of the New Covenant has, on the other hand, as its main duty, an evangelical mission, which must never be ignored. But still it cannot dispense with the preaching of the Law. It must, even there, recur to that as its next duty; for the Law is the true *παίδευσις εἰς Χριστόν*.

The worthlessness of sacrifice as a mere *opus operatum* is most distinctly emphasized by prophecy in opposition to the false esteem in which it was held, which was a token of religious and moral ruin, going hand in hand with an empty service of forms and outward works. Sacrifice, in general, was, as it seems, regarded as a good because a religious work, even when it was not performed in the strict legal manner, but was associated with calf and idol-worship, and therefore with a transgression of the Law (as in our context it is not legal sacrifice that is spoken of, the address being to the kingdom of the ten tribes). In this they wished to honor Jehovah, or pretended to do so. Comp. ver. 6. In that passage the worthlessness of the outward sacrifice, which was only in form a seeking of Jehovah, and could not be a seeking from the heart (ver. 15), is strongly expressed. Comp. Mic. vi. 8; Is. i. 11-17; Ps. xl. 7, 9; i. 8 ff.; li. 18 ff.; i. Sam. xv. 22.

To infer, however, from this polemic of prophecy against the *opus operatum* of sacrifice (sacrifice to an idol is to the Prophet only slaughter), that it values sacrifice in itself but little, and stands as to the Law, etc., upon a freer standpoint, is assuredly wrong. If the prophets were the stern guardians of the Law, and especially of the worship of Jehovah, and directed their rebukes against every depreciation of the law and every apostasy from Jehovah, and if they also placed the ceremonial element in worship in contrast to the ethical and internal, they did so because the latter was absent, and because it alone gave to sacrifice its real worth. And in our passage it is not to be overlooked that Hosea turns first to the sacrifices of the ten tribes, to the places of unlawful sacrifice, and denounces them as worthless, not merely on account of the absence of the inner qualities, but because he saw the people engaged in a course of conduct illegal and therefore displeasing to God, rejects their sacrifices and therefore so much the more opposes to these the inner qualities, and amongst these, the knowledge of God, which would lead back to God and thereby also to the legal worship of Jehovah with its sacrifices. On the relation of the sacrificial service to the future time of salvation, see on Chap. xiv.

5. Chap. vi. 7. "They have, like Adam, broken the covenant." The passage is important as being the only, but a clear, reference to the Fall in the Old Testament. This is presented as a transgression of the Covenant, and God is therefore conceived of as standing to the first man in a covenant-relation. Adam's sin appears, therefore, to the Prophet, not as something trifling, but as a great transgression, just as Paul speaks of it in the Epistle to the Romans, though there is nothing said of the consequences of this sin upon mankind. And while this transgression is thought of as a (the first) violation of the covenant, there is also ascribed to it a significance as influencing the destiny of the world.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. WÜRT. SUMM.: Preachers should rebuke the sins of rulers as well as those of subjects, so that they bear not the guilt of the souls that are lost, whose blood God will require at their hands.

Ver. 2. Great zeal, even though it be in the cause of religion, is not the chief thing. It is of itself mere bigotry and has no merit, but is rather to be rejected if it is against the truth.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those that have apostatized from the truths of God are often the most subtle and barbarous persecutors of those that still adhere to them. — M.]

Ver. 4. The longer thou continuest in sin the more difficult is the return. He who commits sin is the servant of sin. At first he will not return, at last he cannot. The heart is hardened. The spirit of whoredom: not single sins that are committed, but an evil spirit rising up and taking possession of the soul. The more men sin against God, the more they lose the knowledge of Him, and the more difficult it is for them to return; and so the chastisement of God must be more severe to bring them back to Him.

Ver. 5. God spares not even his own, when they sin.

STARKE: He who mingles with the ungodly will be punished with them.

[PUSEY: In the presence of God there is needed no other witness against the sinner than his own conscience. — M.]

Ver. 6. STARKE: God will not be slighted with the outward appearance of godliness. In distress men should indeed seek God, though not in hypocrisy, but in sincerity. Our most acceptable sacrifice to God, is the surrender of ourselves, body and soul, to Him.

Ver. 7. WÜRT. SUMM.: Godless parents usually bring up godless children, whom God regards not as his, but as strange children, children of whoredom. They shall suffer a like punishment with their parents. But God will require their blood at the hands of their parents, from whom a heavy reckoning will be demanded. Therefore bring up your children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord, and they will not be strange children, but God's, and heirs of eternal life.

Ver. 9. STARKE: In time of war men should not be troubled so much about the cruelty and tyranny of their enemies, as they should lament and bewail their sins.

Ver. 10. PFAFF BIBELWERK: God has set firm bounds even to the great ones of this earth, and prescribed to them laws which they must observe. But when they remove these limits God pours out his wrath upon them like water.

HENGSTENBERG: If those are cursed who remove a neighbor's landmarks, how much more they who remove those of God!

[SCOTT: When princes break down the fence of the divine law by their edicts, decisions, or examples, they open the flood-gates of God's wrath: and when subjects willingly obey ungodly and persecuting statutes, they may expect to be given up to grievous exactions and oppressions; for God will disregard the interests, liberty, and security of those who disregard his honor and renounce his service. — M.]

Ver. 12. LUTHER: There is nothing more delicate than a moth. One can scarcely touch it without killing it, and yet it eats through cloth, and so destroys our clothing. And the wood-worm eats little by little through the hardest wood. So the wrath of God is despised by the ungodly, as though it were without power; yet whatever contends with it must come to destruction, and cannot be restored to its former condition by any might or influence. We are thus warned not to live on in such security, but to fear the Lord and walk in all his ways. All strength and force without this, will not defend us from his wrath.

[PUSEY: So God visits the soul with different distresses, bodily or spiritual. He impairs, little by little, health of body or fineness of understanding; or He withdraws grace or spiritual strength, or allows lukewarmness or distaste for the things of God to creep over the soul. These are the gnawings of the moth, overlooked by the sinner, if he persevere in carelessness as to his conscience, yet bringing in the end entire decay of health, of understanding, of heart, of mind, unless God interfere by the mightier mercy of some heavy chastisement, to awaken him. — M.]

Ver. 13. Seek not thy consolation in the world, when the consequences of sin make themselves felt. It helps thee indeed, but only to drag thee completely into its power, and to certain ruin. If men would have the wounds of sin healed, they must hasten to the true Physician, and not to false ones, whose help is of no avail.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those who neglect God and seek to creatures for help shall certainly be disappointed; that depend upon them for support, will find them not foundations but broken reeds; that depend upon them for supply will find them not fountains but broken cisterns; that depend upon them for comfort and a cure will find them miserable comforters and physicians of no value — M.]

Ver. 14. STARKE: Those who have an angry God, concern themselves to no purpose about resisting their enemies or other misfortunes.

Ver. 15. [MATTHEW HENRY: When men begin to complain more of their sins than of their afflictions, there begin to be some hopes of them. And this is that which God requires of us when we are under his correcting hand, that we own ourselves to be in fault, and to be justly corrected. — M.]

Chap. vi. ver. 1. The language of the repenting sinner. How often does it come so late as this! But O that it would always come! How much must intervene before it comes (much use of the Lord's chastening rod)! but how great also is the gain! Alas that it is so hard for men to decide so! but what a blessed decision it is! — M.]

Ver. 2. God revives us not only that we may live before Him, *i. e.*, to his glory and service, but also live in the enjoyment of his presence and blessing.

Ver. 3. Delay is more disastrous in nothing

than in turning to God. [PUSEY : We know in order to follow : we follow in order to know. Light prepares the way for love. Love opens the mind for new love. The gifts of God are interwoven. They multiply and reproduce each other, until we come to the perfect state of eternity. — M.]

Ver. 4. Transient heats in religion do not accomplish the work which steadfastness must crown.

[MATTHEW HENRY : God never destroys sinners till He sees there is no other way with them. — M.]

Ver. 5. CRAMER : The Law is the ministry which, through the letter, kills. He, therefore, who is not slain and does not die to sin, cannot be made alive through the voice of the Gospel.

[PUSEY : God's past loving-kindness, his pains (so to speak), his solicitations, the drawings of his grace, the tender mercies of his austere chastisements, will, in the day of judgment, stand out as clear as the light, and leave the sinner confounded, without excuse. In this life also God's judgments are as a light which goeth forth, enlightening not the sinner who perishes, but others, in the darkness of ignorance, on whom they burst with a sudden blaze of light.]

Ver. 6. WÜRT. SUMM. : The means by which we become partakers of the mercy of God, are not our works and desert, but the true knowledge of God and faith in Christ which works by love, in

which God has more delight and satisfaction than in all outward works. And this is the sum of the whole Christian religion, that we believe in the name of the Son of God and have love toward one another.

Ver. 7. PRAFF. BIBELWERK. Beware of transgressing, by presumptuous sin, the covenant which thou hast made with thy God. He is a great God and not a man, with whom thou hast entered into obligations.

[PUSEY : *There*, He does not say, *where*. But Israel and every sinner in Israel know full well, *where*. God points out to the conscience of sinners the place and the time, the very spot, where they offended Him. . . . The sinner's conscience and memory fills up the word *there*. It sees the whole landscape of its sins around. — M.]

Ver. 10. PRAFF. BIBELWERK : Woe to the land, the city, or the church, where God sees nothing but abominations and sins!

Ver. 11. Each one reaps what he has sown. If thou dost become partaker in other men's sins, thou wilt meet with their punishment. If the captivity of God's people is certain, so is also deliverance. But, on the other hand also, the promise presupposes the threatening: no deliverance without judgment upon sin; salvation comes, but only after a long and dark night.

2. Chiefly against the Court.

CHAP. VII. 1-16.

- 1 When I would heal Israel,
Then the iniquity of Ephraim is made manifest,
And the evil deeds of Samaria.
For they have worked deceit, and the thief enters (the house)
A band of robbers plunders in the street.
- 2 And they will not say to their heart,
(That) I have remembered all their wickedness ;
Now their deeds have beset them round ;
They are before my face.
- 3 By their wickedness they have pleased the king,
And by their falsehood the princes.
- 4 All of them (are) adulterers,
(They are) like an oven heated¹ by the baker,
Who rests, stirring up (the fire),
From the kneading of the dough, until it is raised.¹
- 5 On the (feast-) day of our king,
The princes begin in the heat² of wine
He draws out his hand [goes hand in hand] with scorn³.
- 6 For they draw close together ; like the oven is
Their heart in its craftiness ;
Their anger³ sleeps the whole night,
In the morning it burns like a flame of fire.
- 7 All of them are heated like the oven,
And devour their judges,
All their kings have fallen,
And there is none among them that cries to me.
- 8 Ephraim mingles with the heathen,
Ephraim has become a cake not turned.

- 9 Strangers devour his strength,
Yet he does not know it.
Gray hairs are also sprinkled over him,
And he does not know it.
- 10 And the pride of Israel testifies to his face;
Yet they do not return to Jehovah their God,
And do not seek Him with [in spite of] all this.
- 11 And Ephraim became a silly dove, without understanding.
To Egypt they called:
To Assyria they went.
- 12 As they are going
I will spread over them my net;
As a bird of heaven I will bring them down.
I will chastise them,⁴ according to the announcement to their congregation
- 13 Woe to them that they have wandered from me!
Destruction upon them, that they have sinned against me!
For I would have redeemed them⁵
But they spoke lies against me.
- 14 They did not cry to me with their heart,
For they shrieked upon their beds;
For corn and new wine they distress themselves;⁶
They apostatized from me.
- 15 And I instructed (them),
I strengthened their arm;
But they devised evil against me.
- 16 They will not return upwards⁷ [to God],
They have become like a deceitful bow.
Their princes will fall by the sword,
On account of the rage of their tongues:
This⁷ (will be) their scorn in the land of Egypt.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL

1 Ver. 4. — בַּעֲרָה is accentuated as Milêl, probably because the Masorites took objection to the fem. form, תַּבְרִיר, which is elsewhere masculine. But the names for fire and anything connected therewith are in the Semitic languages usually fem. Hence בַּעֲרָה is to be regarded as actually fem., and to be pointed בַּעֲרָה [See Green, *Heb. dr.*, § 196 c. — הַמְּצָרוֹ. הַמְּצָץ takes in the construct inf. the fem. ending, like חָמַל (Ezek. xvi. 5). — M.]

[2 Ver. 5. — חֲמַת is an example of a construct before a noun having a preposition. This may denote the direct and powerful influence of the wine upon the revellers, or it may merely be an example of a poetical usage, Green § 255, 1. — לִצְּנִים *dr. ley.* Some assume a verb לִצְּנִץ, but Gesenius, Fürst and most regard the form as Piel Part of לוּץ with מ dropped. Houbigant would change the reading into לִצְּנִים, but needlessly. — M.]

[3 Ver. 6. — Henderson objects, to the change of reading to אַפְיָהֶם, that this never occurs in the sense, *ira, furor, eorum*. But as anger is a frequent sense of the dual form, and as the exigencies of the case seem to demand another reading, it seems reasonable to adopt the emendation. The conjecture has also the support of antiquity, as the Targum renders רַחֲמֵהוֹן and the Syr. ܪܚܡܝܗܘܢ. Only it is not necessary to retain the י; the form given in the Exposition is probably the correct reading. — M.]

4 Ver. 12. — אֶפְסִיקֶהֶם. This form is from the Hiphil הִפְסִיק for הִרְסִיק.

5 Ver. 13. — אֶפְדֶּהֶם is a *voluntative* or *optative*: I would or would like to redeem them.

6 Ver. 14. — The LXX. have read יִתְבַּדְּדוּ: they wound themselves. [But authority vastly preponderates in favor of the received reading. — M.]

[7 Ver. 16 — לֹא עֵל. It is agreed that the Kamets is due to the pause and that the normal form is עֵל. Critics are divided as to whether this should be regarded as a noun used collectively (they return to no-gods = idols) or as an adverb: upwards = to heaven, where God is. The word means properly an elevation, summit; hence the notion that 't might be used concretely = most High. In xi. 7 this certainly seems the true meaning. Again it might be used adverbially, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 1. The best lexicographers (Gesenius, Fürst) approve the former sense here; some of the best Expositors (Manger, Ewald, Keil, and others) prefer the latter. The Anglo-American expositors, generally, agree with the first named class. Newcome prefers to read לֹא יוֹעִיל: that which cannot profit. — M.] — עֵל, *dr. ley.*

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1, 2. When I would heal Israel, etc. It was just when God attempted to heal them that their corruption was displayed in its full extent. If it had not been so great the attempt would not have been vain. The latter consisted in the chastisements themselves, but also in the discourses of the Prophet calling them to repentance. Now follows a description of their dreadful condition: lying, theft, and robbery. In the midst of it all, the greatest security, not a single thought of divine punishment. Their deeds have beset them round. This expresses evidently the boldness of their sinning = their sins have so increased as to become mountains hedging them round.

Ver. 3. The situation is the more desperate as the corruption extends to the highest ranks.

Ver. 4. They are all adulterers. The whole people are such, not merely the king and princes, though these are necessarily included. The adultery in this connection (comp. ver. 2: lying, thieving, and robbery, and ver. 5: debauchery) is to be taken in its literal sense. The comparison of the adulterer to a burning oven is here decisive; which does not suit adultery in the figurative application = idolatry, but expresses well the burning of lust.

בִּעְרָהּ מִבֶּצֶק, literally: burning from the baker = heated by the baker. This burning of the oven is further described still more closely and figuratively, and that with relation to the increase of the heat, in the following words: 'יִשְׁבֵּר וְג'.

Wünsche: Who rests, stirring up, from the kneading of the dough until it is leavened, i. e., when he has kneaded the dough, he rests, namely from kneading, which is the most fatiguing part of the whole process of bread-baking, but then does something else, which compared with the other is resting, namely, heats the stove and stirs it up from the time the dough is kneaded until it is raised. During this time while the process of fermentation is going on, the stove is being heated so as to become quite hot, i. e., hot enough for baking. The Part. therefore is not used for the Inf. depending on יִשְׁבֵּר = who ceases to stir up. It would be strange if emphasis were to be laid upon ceasing, leaving off, when the object is to show that the heat increases. And Wünsche remarks rightly that it would be out of place to heat the oven before the dough was kneaded, and then to cease beating it, but that the contrary process is the one followed. [Henderson takes מְעִיר in the sense of heating, as also does Gesenius. His application is as follows: "To place the violent and incontinent character of their lust in the strongest light, the Prophet compares it to a baker's oven which he raises to such a degree of heat that he only requires to omit feeding it during the short period of the fermentation of the bread. Such was the libidinous character of the Israelites that their impure indulgences were subject to but slight interruptions." But it is evident that the Prophet did not intend to call attention to any interruption of indulgence (and if he had the mode of conveying that notion would not have been very natural), but to emphasize its constant commission. Horsley takes מְעִיר in the sense of stoker, one who attends to the fire, and makes it the subject of יִשְׁבֵּר: "the stoker desists after the kneading of the dough until the fermentation be complete." He then gives a most

fanciful application to the act of indulgence. For a sufficient explanation of the images see the Doctrinal and Ethical section, No. 1. — M.]

Ver. 5. But they are not only adulterers; they are also drunkards. They are heated with wine as well as with lust. The rulers here lead the way by their example. In the day of our king = festal day, probably birth-day. A banquet is referred to, given by the king to his nobles. By the phrase, our king, Hosea indicates his citizenship in the kingdom of Israel.

הִיָּלֵךְ: the LXX., Syr., Chald., and Jerome they began. Others they are diseased. But the

Hiphil does not mean: to be sick — 'יִשְׁתָּךְ וְג'. The king is the subject; literally: draws out [stretches out] his hand with. This means: he holds out his hand constantly to them = keeps company, goes hand in hand with them. Scorners, men who throw ridicule upon what is sacred, and is regarded as sacred. Such derision is specially natural in a state of intoxication. Hence the connection in which it stands here with the drinking-bout, a connection which is certainly not fortuitous.

Ver. 6. The figure of the heated oven is again taken up. But it becomes here an image of the heat of anger which burns in their hearts, which, being craftily concealed, does not at first make itself manifest, but which grows only the more surely, and at last breaks out in deeds of violence. (Just so is it in ver. 4 with the heat of the bake-oven.) The notion is evidently this, that the cordiality of the princes towards the king in the banquet is only apparent, only the result of cunning. It ends with an insurrection, with the murder of the king, who has certainly richly deserved such a lot. — מִקְרִבֵּי יָד: This is a difficult expression

Some: they have made their heart approach (resemble) an oven. But this is languid. Would any one say, in giving an illustration, that the object was only "approximately" like the image?

Besides, מִקְרִבֵּי with מִנְפֵּר would be superfluous. Keil: they have brought their heart into their craftiness as into an oven. The cunning is compared with the oven; the heart with the fuel. This clearly gives a plain sense. It would be perhaps more correct to detach קִרְבּוֹ from what follows as forming a clause by itself. Simson: they (the conspirators) approach. Wünsche, perhaps better: they draw close together, namely, in the banquet, at all events, as conspirators. The following words then mean simply: like an oven is their heart in their malice. Thus the malicious heart is like an oven which only waits for the kindling of

a fire. — קָלִי-לַיְלָה וְג'; according to the Masoretic punctuation: the whole night sleeps their baker. Baker would then = he who heats the oven, i. e., their heart inflames them. By the baker might be understood passion (Ewald, Keil). This would rather be compared to the fire. "The baker sleeps" would then be explained as meaning that the baker after kindling the fire, cared no more about it. But it would not be exactly suitable to conceive of "passion" as sleeping, that is, not stirring up the fire. Simson refers "baker" to a person, the leader of the conspiracy. But the following member of the verse creates most difficulty. הִנֵּה introduces another subject, the oven. It is therefore naturally suggested (Wünsche) to change the pointing into שִׁנְיָהם = their anger. This is

represented as fire, and this sleeps in the night, *i. e.*, it burns on, unperceived, during the whole night, until in the morning it becomes a clearly burning flame. So with their anger. "Night" and "morning" allude primarily to the figure of the fire, but probably also to the thing represented itself, especially if it be supposed that at the end of the feast, which has lasted the whole night, the anger breaks forth in the morning in violent acts, which are more particularly described in

Ver. 7. All of them, probably not merely the princes, but the whole people, together with the princes, who gave the impulse to the rest. They devour their judges, *i. e.*, the kings. The following clause: all their kings fall, does not add anything new, but only expresses what is meant by the judges. This applies to the period succeeding that of Jeroboam II., when in swift succession Zachariah was overthrown by Shallum, Shallum by Menahem, and Menahem's son Pekahiah by Pekah, and between Zachariah and Shallum eleven years' anarchy prevailed. The Prophet alludes here to such events, certainly to a number of such events (perhaps also to earlier revolutions in the succession), as the plural, judges, kings, plainly shows. Yet the particular description in vers. 5, 6, suggest the conjecture that the Prophet had in mind a special case, and then in ver. 7 gives a general view. And there is none amongst them who calls upon me. The reference probably is to the kings. The sentence thus indicates briefly but strikingly the complete estrangement from God, the deplorable situation of these kings. Keil supposes the whole nation to be referred to: no one is brought to reflection in the midst of these mournful circumstances, that he should return to the Lord.

Ver. 8. Ephraim mingles itself up with the nations. This refers certainly not to the invasion of the Israelitish possessions by the heathen, nor merely to alliances with them (ver. 11), but in addition to something more profound, it supposes that through idolatry heathen practices were followed. Comp. Ps. cv. 35, 36, 39, "which passage furnishes a commentary upon ours" (Wünsche). A cake not turned, and therefore burnt on one side (while it is not baked at all on the other). The idea is plain. [On the preceding sentence, Henderson: "In Ps. cv. 35 a similar expression is used of promiscuous intercourse with idolaters. That such intercourse generally, and not specifically the entering into leagues with them, is meant, appears from the following clause, in which, to express the worthlessness of the Ephraimitish character, the people are compared to a cake, which, from not having been turned, is burnt and good for nothing. . . . Such was the state of the apostate Israelites; they had corrupted themselves and were fit only for rejection." — M.]

Ver. 9. Their being burnt declared figuratively that strangers devoured their strength. This is not merely an outward devastation by war, but an inner consumption by the inroads of heathen practices. Indications of old age also are apparent in Israel as tokens of speedy decay.

Ver. 10. See chap. v. 5.

Ver. 11. A consequence of impenitence. Israel is like a simple dove, which, not observing the snare set for her, is caught in it (ver. 12). They called out to Egypt; they went to Assyria. As Syria threatened Israel. The latter then turned immediately to Egypt, to obtain help against Assyria, and partly sought to gain the favor of Assyria (chap. viii. 9). And after all they fell into the net of Assyria.

Ver. 12. It is the Lord who inveigles them into destruction. According to the announcement to their congregation = according to the oft-repeated threatening against the people (comp. in the Law, Lev. xxvi. 14 ff.; Deut. xxviii. 15 ff.).

Ver. 13. They spoke lies concerning me namely, that I would not help them. And they in effect, lie when they do not call out for help.

Ver. 14. And they did not cry out to me with their heart, even if they did cry with the mouth. Their cry was one of unbelieving despair.

יִתְבַּרְרָה, according to Fürst, to distress themselves, parallel to יִלְלָה. Others: assemble themselves in crowds, *i. e.*, with eager desire for corn and wine. [See Grammatical Note.]

Ver. 15. They devise evil against me, namely, in their apostasy.

Ver. 16. עַל, probably adverb = upwards. [See Grammatical Note.]

A deceitful bow: a bow upon which the archer cannot depend, which, when he is in the act of shooting, he fears may cause him to miss his aim. So God cannot depend upon Israel, is deceived in them every moment, cannot reach the aim with them which He desires. Others claim for רִמְיָה the meaning: slackness, therefore, a slack bow, which cannot carry the arrow to the mark. Each meaning affords essentially the same result. The princes are emphasized, because they were the seducers of the people. This (will become) a scorning in the land of Egypt; that is: the scorn of Egypt will fall upon them for this reason, namely, on account of the falling of the princes just mentioned. Not = because they placed their trust in Egypt and fell notwithstanding (Keil), for this would rather earn them the scorn of Assyria. They would be ridiculed by Egypt because of the weakness revealed in their fall, while they had magnified their strength before Egypt.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The Prophet assails the practices of the court without ceremony, and brands them with some powerful strokes, as a course of life, in which the nobles are as ready to carouse together as to conspire against one another. All discipline, as well as all fidelity, is wanting. "Even when they hold a feast in honor of their king, there is no end to their gorging, lewdness, carousing, etc. The more vilely they behave, the better they suppose they shall celebrate the day of the king. On the other hand, when they are dissatisfied with their king they are as eager and anxious to murder him, as they formerly were to drink his health until they became intoxicated." The spirit which governs these circles is aptly compared to a fire, for it is a powerful passion by which they are driven about, revealed in various forms, partly in the form of sensual and fleshly lust, and partly in the form of craft, rage, and party-intrigue. With the loss of morality, frivolity goes hand in hand, partly as consequence and partly as cause. The courtiers together with the king are "scorners," or make common cause with them. "The scorner, יִלְלָה, is the presumptuous, haughty, puffed-up (enlightened) man, who sets himself above what is and is regarded as sacred, and so practices his scornful amusement." Comp. also vers. 16: the insolence of the tongue.

2. The decay of the kingdom is already patent. Ver. 9: Gray hairs show themselves. But where the mistake lies, namely, in apostasy from Jehovah, those of the upper circles will not regard it (for it is these that the Prophet has specially in mind, comp. also ver. 16). Therefore, instead of returning to Him and seeking Him (ver. 10), the opposite means are seized upon, which have a result just the opposite of what they desire: help is sought in the world-powers (ver. 11). Not merely the vanity but the disastrous nature of such dealing is now clearly expressed; for Israel is just preparing the way for its own ruin. It is like a silly dove, which does not see the net, and so straightway falls into it, *i. e.*, the world-powers are preparing its destruction. In truth, however, it is God who employs them to punish his faithless people (ver. 12). And thus will be fulfilled the previous announcement of punishment by the prophets (according to the declaration to their congregation, ver. 12). It is not yet particularly indicated how the world-powers are to accomplish their destruction, nothing being as yet said of a captivity.

3. We may collect the other scattered strokes delineating Israel's conduct towards God (for in such brief touches are the moral and religious views of our book exhibited). — Ver. 2 describes the insensibility of the conscience, which in the commission of evil deeds ignores God's omniscience, while nothing is more certain than that God knows them — they are before his face.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

PFaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 1. When God lays his hand upon the conscience and his Spirit chastens it, then is first truly felt the greatness of sin. O, that we would subject ourselves to such chastening of the Spirit, and we would be saved!

CRAMER: When a sinner is about to receive help, it is with him as with many patients. They often do not feel their disease and danger, until the physician comes and reveals them.

PFaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 2. It is great simplicity on the part of the ungodly to suppose that God does not know their wickedness. Mark, soul, the eyes of the Lord are like flames of fire, and know even the most secret things of thy heart, and accompany thee in all thy evil ways.

[**MATT. HENRY:** This is the sinner's atheism. As good say there is no God, as say He is either ignorant or forgetful; none that judgeth in the earth, as say He remembers not the things He is to give judgment upon. — M.]

PFaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 4. Ye lustful men who burn so in your lascivious desires, know that

a fire is prepared for you in the other world where you will burn forever.

PFaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 7. What a deplorable situation men are in, when they have no longer confidence to cry out to God for help in their distress, because conscience tells them that they have made Him their enemy. But it is a great consolation to the pious that, when there is none to take their part, they have free access to God and his help.

Ver. 8. Beware of heathenish desires and practices. As soon as thou dost admit them — and they may obtain entrance in all kinds of seemingly harmless shapes, even in a refined form — they injure thy religious nature. The result is a stupefying of the spiritual sense, the loss of spiritual taste, then only remains an “unturned, insipid, and disgusting cake.”

[**PUSEY:** Ver. 9. “Thy gray hairs are thy passing-bell,” says the proverb. — M.]

PFaff. *Bibelwerk:* Ver. 10. Man, thy sins condemn thyself. What! wouldst thou exculpate thyself? Turn only to thy conscience and ask it; it will soon utter thy condemnation.

[**PUSEY:** Ver. 13. To be separated from God is the source of all evils. Whoever seeks anything out of God or against his will, whoever seeks from man or from idols, from fortune or from his own powers, what God alone bestows; whoever acts as if God were not a good God ready to receive the penitent, or a just God who will avenge the holiness of his laws and not clear the guilty, does in fact speak lies against God. — M.]

Ver. 14. Is it the worst with thee when prosperity is past? To be vexed at the loss of temporal blessings, is a mourning of this world, and does not lead to life.

MATT. HENRY: To pray is to lift up the soul unto God; this is the essence of prayer. If that be not done, words, though never so well worded, are but wind; but if there be that, it is an acceptable prayer though the groanings cannot be uttered. — M.]

[**PUSEY:** Ver. 15. The creature can neither hurt nor profit the Creator. But since God vouchsafed to be their King, He designed to look upon their rebellions as so many efforts to injure Him. — M.]

Ver. 16. Whither dost thou turn? Upwards or downwards?

[**PUSEY:** *Like a deceitful bow.* In like way doth every sinner act, using against God in the service of Satan, God's gifts of nature or of outward means, talents or wealth, or strength, or beauty, or power of speech, — God gave all for h's own glory; and man turns all aside to do honor and service to Satan. — M.]

II. THE JUDGMENT.

A. "*Sowing the Wind brings forth the Whirlwind as a Harvest.*" *Gallina Dependence upon Assyria.*

CHAPTER VIII. 1-14.

- 1 To thy mouth (set) the trumpet :
 " Like the eagle (it is coming) upon the house of Jehovah "
 Because they broke my Covenant,
 And sinned against my Law.
- 2 To me they will cry :
 " My God,¹ we know Thee, (we) Israel.
- 3 Yet Israel has rejected the good ;
 Let the enemy pursue him !²
- 4 They set up kings, but not by me,
 Made princes, but I knew (them) not.
 Their silver and their gold
 They made into idols for themselves,
 That it [silver and gold] might be destroyed.
- 5 He has rejected thy calf, Samaria,
 My anger is inflamed against them,
 How long shall ye be incapable of purity ?
- 6 For that also [the calf] is from Israel,
 The maker has formed it,
 And it is no God,
 For the calf of Samaria will become fragments.³
- 7 For they sowed wind and will reap a whirlwind,
 It has no stalk,
 (But) a sprout which will yield no meal ;
 If it should yield (any),
 Strangers would devour it.
- 8 Israel is swallowed up,
 Even now have they become among the nations,
 Like a vessel, in which no pleasure is taken.
- 9 For they have gone up to Assyria ;
 (As) a wild-ass going alone by herself,
 Ephraim gave presents⁴ (for) love.
- 10 Even if they give presents⁴ among the nations,
 I will now gather [carry] them together (thither),
 And in a little they will have sorrow for the tribute of the king of the princes.⁵
- 11 For Israel has increased altars for sinning,
 They became to him altars for sinning.
- 12 I presented to him a myriad⁶ (precepts) of my Law,
 (Yet) they are regarded as something strange.
- 13 My sacrificial offerings they sacrifice as flesh and eat (them) :
 Jehovah has no pleasure in them,
 He will now remember their guilt,
 And will punish their princes ;
 They will return to Egypt !
- 14 For Israel forgot his Creator
 And built (idol-) temples,
 And Judah increased the fortified cities :⁷
 But I will send fire into his cities,
 And it shall devour her palaces.⁷

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 2. — **אֱלֹהֵי**: my God. A distributive use of the singular pronoun. Each of the Israelites is represented as uttering the exclamation, and then all combined as making the protestation in common. Israel is in apposition to the subject of **יִרְעָנִי**. — M.]

[2 Ver. 3. — The rendering of Schmoller follows the reading **יִרְעָנִי** which has nearly as much authority ("forty-seven of De Rossi's MSS., and two more by correction, eight of the most ancient and sixty-two other editions, the Syr., Vulg., and Targ.") as **יִרְעָנִי** in the Textus Receptus, and is probably correct. — M.]

[3 Ver. 6. — **שִׁבְרֵי**, *ἀπ. λεγ.* Its root does not exist in Heb. It is usually compared with Chald. **שִׁבַּב** to break in pieces. Henderson prefers to consider it = **שִׁבְרֵי** flames. Arab. **شَبَب**, to kindle a fire. — M.]

4 Vers. 9, 10. — **יָתֵנּוּ** — **יָתֵנּוּ**. The Hiphil and the Kal have here the same meaning: to give presents.

5 Ver. 10. — Simson and others translate: king and princes, namely, those of Israel, referring to the tribute which they pay. Here an asyndeton is assumed, or **וְשָׂרֵי** is read, after the ancient versions and several codices.

6 Ver. 12. — **רַבּוֹ**. According to the Kethibh = **רַבּוֹ** with **ת** rejected = 10000, a myriad. The Masorites, probably because they thought the expression too strong, would make the reading **רַבִּי**, multitudes, from **רַב**, which however does not elsewhere occur in the plural.

7 Ver. 14. — **בְּעָרָיו**, **אֶרְמְזֵיהֶם**. Both of these refer merely to Judah. In the former the people are thought of and therefore the masc. suffix is employed; in the latter the country, and therefore the fem. [It is possible, also, that the latter refers to each of the cities regarded individually. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. (Set) the trumpet to thy mouth. Jehovah commands the Prophet, as the herald of God, to proclaim with the trumpet of Israel the impending judgment: "Like an eagle (it is coming) upon the house of Jehovah." The judgment will fall as swiftly as an eagle (comp. Dent. xxxiii. 49). The house of Jehovah not = the Temple, but Israel, as the people among whom God dwells (should and would dwell), comp. ix. 8-15; Num. xii. 7; Jer. xii. 7; Zech. ix. 8.

Ver. 2. Every one will cry: "My God!" Israel is in apposition to the subject contained in the verb [we know thee, we, Israel]. They rely upon the knowledge of God, which, as his people, they assuredly have. But it is a dead knowledge which can bring no deliverance. — Vers. 3 and 4 show the position of Israel.

Ver. 4. They have set up kings, but not by me. This refers to the self-authorized schism from the royal house of David. All the kings of Israel were not from God (that the government of the Ten Tribes was announced beforehand to Jeroboam by Abijah the Prophet, 1 Kings xi. 30 ff., and that Jehu was anointed king and commissioned by Elisha, do not contradict this, for God makes use even of human sins to execute his decrees); and besides, according to chap. vii. 7, the Prophet probably has in view the frequent violent detronements and usurpations individually. —

לִמְעַן: in order that it, namely, the silver and gold, may be destroyed (comp. ver. 6). **לִמְעַן** expresses the certainty of the result as if it had been designed. [Most have regarded Israel (collectively) as the subject of this verb, but, as Keil says, the same thing is more fully stated in ver. 6, and the connection of the clause is clear. — M.]

Ver. 5. He has rejected thy calf, Samaria. Samaria is mentioned as the capital instead of the whole kingdom. The Calf in Bethel is meant. [Henderson, with many Continental Translators, renders: thy calf is an abomination, the verb being taken intransitively. This is better than the

translation of E. V., which is retained by Pusey in its natural sense, and by Horsley with a most astonishing application of the expression: "Here God himself turns short upon Samaria or the Ten Tribes, and upbraids their corrupt worship by taking to Himself the title of Samaria's calf. I whom you have so dishonored by setting up that contemptible idol as the symbol of my glory — now expressly disown you." The parallelism, as well as the whole drift of the passage seems to confirm the view adopted above. — M.] How long will they be incapable of purity? incapable of walking purely before the Lord instead of polluting themselves with idols.

Ver. 6. **וְהוּא** is the predicate; this also = the Calf. It originated from men — from Israel through the maker — and is therefore no God.

Ver. 7. This result is the natural harvest of the evil sowing. The same image occurs in xii. 2.

וְהוּא is an image of vain human efforts, from which ruin is developed, as naturally as the wind becomes a tempest. Chap. x. 13; Job iv. 8; Prov. xxii. 8 are analogous, where **וְהוּא**, **וְהוּא**, and **וְהוּא** are the seed. The sowing of the wind is first regarded as one which brings a harvest of disaster and ruin, but afterwards, as one which, like the wind (image of nothingness, from which nothing can come), deceives the sower, brings him in no harvest **וְהוּא**: a word-play. The latter is literally meal, flour: perhaps = ears, as bearing the grains from which the flour is made. The following sentence declares that all their prospects were blasted. Israel's efforts in every direction are fruitless. The judgment through Assyria stands in the back ground already.

Ver. 8 is connected with ver. 7, but advances through the pret. **וְהוּא**. Israel is now — already — actually swallowed up. The sequel shows how far and by what means. Like a vessel, etc. comp. Jer. xxii. 28; xlviii. 38.

Ver. 9. **וְהוּא**. Keil gives the meaning thus: While a wild ass, a silly animal, remains

alone by itself, in order to maintain its independence, Ephraim seeks to make alliances with the nations of the world, that are unnatural and incompatible with its position. Yet such a comparison by antithesis is somewhat forced. It is much more natural to consider as the *tertium comp.* the burning lust of the wild ass, and to attach the sentence to the following, in which Ephraim is described as a paramour. Wünsche finds the *tert. comp.* in the stubborn and intractable nature of the wild ass: that Israel made a like exhibition in going to Assyria in spite of all prophetic admonition. [So Henderson and, to a certain extent, Pococke, Horsley, Newcome, and Pusey. There is no reason why the two ideas should not be united. — M.] The meaning of the following member is clearly the same as in our phrase: courting one's friendship or love, and with this object giving him presents, flattering him, etc. So did Ephraim court the friendship of Assyria; but the expression is peculiarly pregnant. They presented love = they gave presents in order thereby to obtain love = they gave gifts for love.

Ver. 10. But this is all in vain. **אֵלֶּיךָ יָבֹאוּ**: I will bring them together, namely, among the nations, *i. e.*, they will carry them together thither. — The following words again are very difficult. According to the Masoretic punctuation: **וְיָחֲלֵי**, they began. Therefore R. Tanchum, and, among the moderns, Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Hitzig, Keil: They began to become small from the burden of the king of the princes. Others, after the LXX. (Symm., Theodot., Syr., Vulg.), deduce the word from **וָחַל**, and take it = to cease from, rest: they will rest a little from the burden of the king and princes: to be understood ironically = they will in captivity be deprived of their kings, and will have therefore to pay tribute to them no longer. Ewald and Meier read **וְיָחֲלֵי**, also from **וָחַל**: to wait, abstain from anything = that they may cease a little from paying this shameful tribute, *i. e.*, that they should wait a little before paying it. But was it Jehovah's purpose only to relieve Israel a short time from this tribute? Simson would therefore explain: In a little sorrow will seize them from the tribute of the king and the princes = in a little they will reap in sorrow the fruits of the tribute which they intend to pay as their security, and which makes them a prey to Assyria. So also Wünsche. [It will be noticed that E. V. takes the same view of the verb, but translates: they shall sorrow a little for the burden. Henderson agrees exactly: they shall snuffer in a little (so the marginal reading in E. V.) by reason of the tribute. So also Cowles. Pusey thinks the meaning to be, that they shall sorrow but a little now on account of their burdens, in comparison with the greater trials of the captivity. — M.] The various views taken of **וְיָחֲלֵי שָׂרִים** are already apparent. It is usually and probably correctly understood of the Assyrian king, in the sense: king of kings. [The native Assyrian word for prince, as lately made out from the inscriptions, is *sarru*, answering to the Hebrew *sar*, and Professor Green (*Pres. Quarterly*, July, 1872, p. 128) is inclined to suspect that it explains this expression: king of princes, "which would seem not to be an arbitrary or merely poetic variation of the lordly title, 'king of kings,' but to contain a designed allusion to the native Assyrian word. And a like allusion may be found in the words attributed to Sennacherib (Is. x. 8):

'Are not my princes altogether kings?' — M.] Therefore (regarding **שָׂרִים** as = tribute) tribute to the king, or tribute which he imposes. [See Textual note.]

Ver. 11. Increased the altars, while Israel should have only one altar.

Ver. 12. Myriads of my Law, hyperbole; to express the almost innumerable individual commands of the Law. [See Textual note.]

Ver. 13. **וְיָרֶבֶב**, according to Fürst from a root **רָבַב**, to roast, formed by reduplication: a sacrifice burnt upon the altar, a holocaust. It is incomplete unless joined with **וְנִבְרַח**, literally, a sacrifice of what is burnt, a burnt-offering. My burnt-offerings, *i. e.*, those which should be burnt for Me, they slaughter for meat and devour. Therefore a complete profanation of the sacrifices. They were concerned only about the flesh. [The usual derivation from **רָבַב**, to give, with the meaning: offerings, gives substantially the same sense: sacrificial offerings, and is, at least, as probable as the other. — M.] They return to Egypt. Egypt is a type of the land of bondage (comp. Deut. xxviii. 68). Actual captivity in Egypt is scarcely meant.

Ver. 14. Israel forgot his Creator. Comp. Deut. xxxii. 15. Temples, perhaps idol-temples. Keil: palaces. The assertion would then be similar to that concerning Judah. But the notion is that Israel builds idol-temples, while Judah does not do that, but by increasing its fortified cities upon which it relied, it showed no less that it was forgetting God. Cities, Palaces, therefore refer to Judah alone.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. In spite of all departure from God, the sinner will often not quite abandon religion, worship, and prayer. In his hypocrisy he often misuses the most beautiful words (ver. 2): "Thou art my God," is otherwise the sum of all precious prayer. Hypocrites compile from the Scriptures a little book of compliments when they find some formulas which are extolled there. They place themselves behind these, while they are far from feeling their power (Rieger).

2. To practice idolatry, in the grosser or in the more refined sense, is to sow the wind, and the whirlwind follows sooner or later, as the harvest. When men forsake the living God, they build upon themselves, upon their own power and wisdom, and the more self-inflated they become, the more certain is their violent fall. All the more so that the foundations of a moral life have been undermined by forgetting the living God; more place is gradually given to vanity, thirst for pleasure, and evil desires, even against their own inclination. They are given up by the God to whom they would not give the glory. There must come a dreadful harvest of whirlwinds, though it may tarry long, though the results of the sowing may deceive and corrupt him long with their glitter and eclat. How often has this been proved in the history of individuals and nations! Compare the fate of the Second French Empire.

3. "God prescribed to Israel myriads of commands." How strongly this expresses the care of God of his people, and the comprehensiveness of his revelation! Truly nothing is wanting to them;

In no way can they complain that they have been meagrely supplied. All the greater is their guilt, in regarding these commands as something "strange," as though they did not concern them at all, while they were issued solely for that people, and designed for their good. On the other side, the expression, "myriads of my Law," is certainly most significant as regards the Old Testament stand-point. All these myriads were then received, but the Gospel was not yet given. The *one* gospel, the *one* message: the Word became Flesh, outweighs them all. The mercy of God in Christ assured by that message has a force quite different from all law. This mercy of the Gospel is also regarded as something strange, though men should regard it as most truly their own, *i. e.*, as answering their most intimate and their inmost needs, which can be said of no law.

4. "They shall return to Egypt." See on ch. ix.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Vers. 2, 3. How ready men are in time of affliction to depend upon their acquaintance with God and their service of Him, and upon their religious life, and to found on these a claim for help, and yet at other times they inquire after God so little! In affliction we hear nothing else than: my God.

WÜRR. SUMM.: The cause of war and all its resulting evils, is, that men reject "the good." And the good is God and his Word, with faith and obedience.

[POCOCKE: God is simply, supremely, wholly, universally good, and good to all, the Author and Fountain of all good, so that there is nothing simply good but God; nothing worthy of that title

except in respect of its relation to Him who is good and doing good. Ps. cxix. 68. — M.]

Vers. 5, 6. Idolatry is man's foulest pollution [MATTHEW HENRY: Deifying any creature makes way for the destruction of it. — M.]

Ver. 8 PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Sin has this bitter fruit also, that those who serve it come to be despised even by the world.

Vers. 9, 10. Trust in men or in earthly things more than in God is by Him counted idolatry. Trust in men must be most sorely repented of: for not only is the desired help most frequently not found, but those who trust in them are outwardly or inwardly still dependent upon them, and will be heavily oppressed.

Ver. 11. It does not help to increase altars. It depends on the one to whom the sacrifice is made.

Ver. 12. How richly has God remembered us with direction! What a rich treasure of the most varied instruction we have in his Word! But what will it profit us if we regard it as something "strange," when God in it addresses Himself directly to us? — The *one* Gospel is assuredly a greater gift of God than the myriads of the Law.

Ver. 13. God is as strict a creditor toward impenitent sinners as He is a kind and indulgent one towards the penitent.

[MATT. HENRY: A petition for leave to sin amounts to an imprecation of the curse for sin, and so it shall be answered.

PUSEY: God seems to man to forget his sins, when He forbears to punish them; to remember them when He punishes. — M.]

Ver. 14. Incomprehensible that man should forget his Maker! but it is only too frequent. To have been created by God, and yet to build temples to idols; what a plain contradiction!

B. *The carrying away into Assyria. Decrease of the People.*

CHAPTER IX. 1-17.

- 1 Rejoice not,¹ Israel,
Unto exultation, like the heathen,
For thou hast committed whoredom, departing from thy God,
Thou hast loved the reward of whoredom,
On all corn-floors.
- 2 The threshing-floor and the (oil-) press will not nourish them;²
And the new wine will deceive them.
- 3 They will not remain in the land of Jehovah,
But Ephraim will return to Egypt,
And in Assyria he will eat (things) unclean.
- 4 They will not pour out wine for Jehovah,
For their offerings will not please Him;
Like bread of mourning (their food will be) to them,
All who eat it will defile themselves:
For their bread is only for themselves,
It does not come into the house of Jehovah.
- 5 What will ye do on the day of the assembly,
And on the day of the feast of Jehovah?

- 6 For, behold, they have gone away because of the desolation :
 Egypt will gather them,
 Memphis will bury them.
 Their precious³ things of silver,
 Thistles will inherit them ;
 Thorns (will be) in their tents.
- 7 The days of punishment have come,
 The days of retribution,
 Israel will discover :
 The prophet is foolish,
 The man of the spirit is crazed —
 Because of the greatness of thy guilt,
 And because the enmity is so great.⁴
- 8 Ephraim is a searcher (after revelations) with my God :
 (As to) the Prophet, the snare of the fowler
 Is upon all his paths :
 There is enmity in the house of his God.
- 9 They have wrought deep corruption⁵ as in the days of Gibeah,
 He will remember their guilt,
 He will visit (upon them) their sins.
- 10 I found Israel as grapes in the desert,
 Like the early fruit on the fig tree in its first (bearing) I found your fathers,
 Yet they went after Baal-Peor,
 And consecrated themselves to shame,
 And became an abomination, like their paramour.
- 11 Ephraim — his glory will fly away as a bird ;
 No bearing, no pregnancy, no conception.
- 12 Even if they rear up their sons,
 I will bereave them of men,
 For, indeed, woe is to them,
 When I depart from them !
- 13 Ephraim, like as I saw Tyre,
 (Is) planted by the sea,
 Yet must Ephraim lead out his sons to the murderer.
- 14 Give to them, O Lord : — what wilt Thou give ?
 Give a barren womb and dry breasts.
- 15 All their evil is in Gilgal —
 For there have I hated them ;
 For the evil of their deeds
 Will I drive them out of my house,
 Will not love them any more ;
 All their princes are apostates.
- 16 Ephraim is smitten,
 Their root is withered,
 They will not bear fruit ;
 And even if they should bear,
 I will slay the darlings of their womb.
- 17 My God will abhor them,
 Because they did not hear Him,
 And they will be fugitives among the nations.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL

1 Ver. 1 — The ancient Translators appear to have read אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ. [This is false grammatically, as אֵלֵינוּ is always followed by the future. — M.]

2 Ver. 2. — אֵלֵינוּ. The people are here regarded as a woman. [Tanchum gives the rule that "in continued discourse when a nation or people is spoken of either the fem. suffix agreeing with אֵלֵינוּ : congregation, or the maso. agreeing with אֵלֵינוּ : people, may be used, as also that the singular may be used of them viewed as a body, and the plural when

they are regarded as consisting of distinct individuals." So Ewald as to the gender, making the suffix relate to "*die treulose Gemeine*."—M.]

3 Ver. 6. — מְחַמֵּד is in the construct state with לְ.

4 Ver. 7. — וְיִרְפָּה. The sentence continues as though a conjunction [because] preceded. The conjunction is implied in בָּל.

[5 Ver. 9. — For the asyndeton here, see note on chap. v. 2. It is best to take שָׁהָרָה intransitively, and not understand an object, e. g. וְיִרְפָּהָם, which some supply.—M.]

6 Ver. 13. — וְיִצְרֶהוּ forms the apodosis which introduces a contrast to the protasis. לְהוֹצִיאוֹ = must lead forth. See Ewald, 287, e. [The literal rendering is: But Ephraim (is) to lead forth, etc.—M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Vers. 1, 2. אֶל-גִּיל intensifies the notion of rejoicing = unto exultation (comp. Job iii. 22). According to what follows it is rejoicing over a bountiful harvest. It was this that Israel expected and for which they would rejoice. But such joy was to be taken from them. פְּעֻמִּים. Keil: "Israel, after the heathen fashion, attributed the blessing of harvest to the gods, and rejoices in it as in a gift of the gods, after the manner of the heathen." That this is the meaning is evident from what follows, in which I discover not so much the ground why Israel should not rejoice, as an explanation of the פְּעֻמִּים, especially in the second member: thou hast loved. The lover's reward is the reward which the paramour gives to his mistress, or here the idol to its servant, the people. The addition: upon all corn-floors, shows what is regarded as that reward: it is that which is laid upon these floors, the fruits of harvest, which Israel considers to be the gift of the idols, as their reward for serving them (comp. ii. 7-14). Press: probably = oil-press, as new wine is specified afterwards; comp. also ii. 10-24; corn, wine, and oil are therefore mentioned together.

Ver. 3 shows how this will be brought about; it is not owing to the failure of the harvest, but to a captivity: thus they will lose their harvest which had grown. Return to Egypt, etc.: Keil is here undoubtedly correct when he says: "The expulsion is described as a return to Egypt, as in ch. viii. 13; but Assyria is mentioned immediately afterwards as the real land of banishment. That this threat is not to be understood as implying that they will be carried away to Egypt as well as to Assyria, but that Egypt is referred to here and in ver. 6, just as in viii. 13 simply as a type of the land of captivity, so that Assyria is represented as a new Egypt, may be clearly seen from the very words of our verse, in which the eating of unclean bread in Assyria is mentioned as the immediate consequence of a return to Egypt, whereas neither here nor in ver. 6 is there any allusion to a carrying away to Assyria at all; but, on the contrary, in ver. 6, Egypt only is introduced as the place where they are to find their grave. This becomes still more evident from the fact that Hosea speaks throughout of Assyria as the rod of God's wrath for his apostate people (comp. v. 13; x. 6, 14). Finally, it is clearly stated in xi. 5 that Israel will not return to Egypt, but that Assyria will be their king. By the allusions to Egypt, therefore, the carrying away into Assyria is simply represented as a state of bondage and oppression similar to Israel's residence in Egypt, or merely the threatening of Deut. xxviii. 68, transferred to Ephraim." They will eat (what is) defiled: partly because the legal prohibitions with relation to particular

kinds of food could be observed only with difficulty in a foreign country, and especially because with the cessation of the sacrificial rites in general, the offering of the first-fruits must cease also, and all food not sanctified by the offering of the first fruits was unclean to Israel. This is completed in ver. 4.

Ver. 4. וְלֹא יִקְרָב לוֹ: will not be well pleasing to Him; therefore their sacrifices must be taken as the subject in spite of the accents. The meaning is: the sacrifices would not please Him, and therefore none are brought. Israel could not sacrifice to God in exile when He had withdrawn from them his gracious presence. Like bread of mourning to them (will be their food). Bread that was partaken of where a dead body lay was considered unclean, because the dead defiled for seven days the house, and all that came in contact with them; therefore: all who eat it will defile themselves. Their bread will be לֶכְמֶשָׂם = for the support of life, and therefore it must be eaten by them, but it does not come into the house of God to be consecrated.

Ver. 5. Festal days are no longer possible. To attempt to distinguish between מוֹעֵד and חַג (the former = the three annual pilgrim feasts, the latter = the other feasts, or, specially, the great harvest-feast, that of Tabernacles), is arbitrary. The expressions are probably synonymous. The notion is only emphasized by the second expression. מוֹעֵד regards the feasts outwardly, as gatherings; חַג rather denoting the rejoicing, or festal character of those occasions.

Ver. 6. They have gone away: the prophet sees them in the Spirit as already in banishment. מִצָּר, literally: out of desolation. On Egypt see at ver. 3. [Keil: "Egypt is mentioned as the place of banishment, in the same sense as in ver. 3. There they will all find their graves. בָּהּ or בָּהָ, as in Is. xix. 13; Jer. ii. 16; xlv. 1; Ezek. xxx. 13-16, probably contracted from מִנְה, answers rather to the Coptic *Membe*, *Memphe*, than to the old Egyptian, Men-nefr. i. e., *mansio bona*, the profane name of the city of Memphis, the ancient capital of Lower Egypt, the ruins of which are to be seen on the west bank of the Nile, to the south of Old Cairo." Memphis was a celebrated burying-place of the Egyptians. The Anglo-American Commentators generally assume a literal allusion to Egypt.—M.] מְחַמֵּד לְכֶסֶף = the costliness of their silver [see Gram. note], probably = their houses filled and decked with silver, comp. the parallel אֶתְּלִיפָה. The growth of thorns and thistles is an image of utter desolation (comp. Is. xxxiv. 13).

Vers. 7, 8. The Prophet is foolish. This is in sense dependent upon יָדָעוּ. False prophets are meant, who flattered the people, promising them only good. These will be shown to be fools. Even the false prophet is a man of the spirit, but it is an evil spirit that possesses him (רִיחַ שָׁחַר, 1 Kings xxii. 22). On account of the greatness of thy guilt, this will happen, namely, that mentioned at the beginning of the verse. בְּמַלְאָכָה, ambush, enmity, namely, against God and his prophets, as is explained in ver. 8. Keil: a searcher is Ephraim with my God. לִצְפָּה is used of the "looking out" of the prophet while waiting for a divine revelation. The meaning is: Israel searches out divine revelations along with "my God," i. e., the God of the prophet. He trusts in his own prophets, not in those inspired by Jehovah. Others find in צָפָה the notion of lying in wait. God would then be the object of the lying in wait of an enemy. He would be so in the person of the prophets, for whom, according to the following hemistich, snares were set (Ewald, Umbreit, Meier). But the prep. עִם would not suit. The notion: lying in wait for God, is also strange. In the second hemistich לִצְפָּה could be the false prophet. The snare of the fowler is upon all his paths would = he brings the people to ruin by all his actions. A snare is in the house of his God, would then be = in the house of the god of the false prophet. But it is better to understand the verse of the enmity which the true prophet must everywhere meet = As to the prophet, the snare, etc. "In the house of his God = in the temple.

Ver. 9. הָעֵמִיקוּר שָׁחַרוּ, literally, they have made deep, they have wrought corruption = they have wrought deep corruption as in the days of Gibeah, when the shameful deed was done (recorded in Judges xix. ff.) to the Levite's concubine, which resulted in the almost complete extermination of the Tribe of Benjamin. Such conduct must be visited with punishment. Comp. viii. 13.

Ver. 10. Israel sinned grievously not only in Gibeah but earlier also, when God yet took such delight in him. His disposition now is shown to be that which he ever had. So much the more deserved is the punishment. Like grapes, etc. = As men prize grapes, etc., so did I prize thee. In the desert applies both to the grapes and to the finding, since grapes can be found in the desert, only when one is in the desert. An allusion to Deut. xxxii. 10. In its beginning, that is, when it begins to bear. Baal-Peor is here local, according to Keil, since לָשׁ is wanting; therefore: to the place of Baal-Peor; elsewhere: to the house of Baal-Peor. וַיִּפְדֶּר, the same word, used designedly, as that employed to express consecration to Jehovah. They became Nazarites to Baal-Peor, to shame. The worship of Baal-Peor is alluded to. [See Num. xxv. 1-5.] The worship of Baal was then Israel's crowning offense, and the old Baal-Peor worship is now renewed.

Vers. 11, 12. They shall increase no longer. The unchaste worship of Baal may be referred to, whose natural punishment is the decrease of the population.

Ver. 13. Difficult. Keil: Ephraim is the ob-

ject of יִצְחָק, and precedes on account of the emphasis laid upon it = I have selected Ephraim for a Tyre = I would make it as glorious as Tyre.

[Comp. Gen. xxii. 8 for a similar use of יִצְחָק. — M.] To describe its glory more particularly, we have the addition: planted in a meadow, a place favorable to growth. Wünsche: Ephraim is the subject to be connected with "planted" = Ephraim is planted in a meadow. The intervening clause he translates: like as I look upon Tyre; and the meaning is: Ephraim blooms like the lordly Tyre, wherever men may look. But this is clearly unnatural. The meaning would rather be: Ephraim is as when I look upon Tyre, i. e., when I look on Ephraim, it is as when I look on Tyre. Others (Ewald) by changing the reading to לְצִנְחָה: in shape, as to form, outward appearance. Others take צֶנֶח in the sense of the Arabic: a palm = Ephraim, as I beheld (it), is a palm. [The opinion approved above is apparently that entertained by the translators in E. V. It is that approved by most expositors, and is the most obvious sense suggested by the words. — M.]

Ver. 14. According to many expositors, this is an intercession of the prophet: May the Lord not let the mothers bring forth, rather than that the sons should be destined to death. But an intercession would scarcely suit in such a severe announcement of judgment. Therefore others consider it a prayer that other punishment may be inflicted. An important element in the punishment is the unfruitfulness of marriages. The thought of ver. 11 would then be essentially resumed.

Ver. 15. It cannot now be shown how all their evil was in Gilgal. Comp. for the rest, ch. iv. 15. [Henderson: "Gilgal, being one of the chief places of idolatrous worship, the wickedness of the nation might be said to be concentrated in it." This is the usual explanation. — M.] From my house = out of my congregation (viii. 1).

Ver. 16. The prophet beholds the future as already present (comp. ver. 11); only that here the image of a tree which can no longer put forth its shoots, is first employed. In the last member, however: and even if they should bear, no figure is employed.

Ver. 17 completes the whole, by giving the ground of the punishment, and stating that punishment clearly to be banishment among the nations, when the people should be fugitives.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. The judgment stands here altogether in the foreground, and the punishment which the people are to expect is that they will be carried away into Assyria. That event is here indicated as "a return to Egypt," not literally, but rather symbolically (ver. 3). The captivity is regarded not so much as an outward fact, but according to its internal aspect, as the direct negation of that which God had done to Israel in leading them out of Egypt. Several features in the Exodus made it of special significance to Israel. One was the great and undeniable mercy of God. Viewing it more closely, it was a merciful liberation of Israel from bondage, from complete subjection to a foreign power. It was thus the condition and the beginning of Israel's existence as an independent nation. But not only so: God thus brought this people under special obligations to Him. As He

had owned them to be his so expressly and emphatically in Egypt, and separated them from Egypt, they became by his leading them forth justly and legitimately his inheritance. And although this specific relation of Israel towards God did not assume its normal form until the giving of the Law, yet the leading of Israel out of Egypt lay at the foundation of their exaltation to become his people. Finally, it was the condition of, and the first step towards, their introduction into that country which God had promised to give to Israel as his people, and had therefore a fundamental significance in their history. Now the Assyrian Captivity is the direct contrast to this, and is therefore represented as a "return to Egypt." It is as signal a display of God's displeasure and wrath as the former was of his mercy. It is the loss of freedom, a reduction to a state of bondage, and a surrender to the power of a foreign enemy. Israel is only free through his God, and remains so only so long as he serves Him; by apostasy from Him, he therefore forfeited that freedom, and therefore at last must lose it, and forego an independent existence. This surrender to the power of the heathen stands further in the strongest contrast to Israel's relation to God as his people. They are thus really dismissed from this position by God, and abandoned by Him as his people (comp. vers. 15, 17). They are in fact made a "Not-My-People." Israel ignored the Law given at Sinai, and Jehovah ignores the deliverance from Egypt; and, lastly, the Assyrian Captivity is the loss of that country in which Israel's position as God's people had its material basis, as the deliverance from Egypt looked towards the possession of that country. Comp. ver. 3. And as the Promised Land was essentially one of divine blessing, the loss of this blessing is naturally referred to with special emphasis. If Israel has, like the heathen, ascribed such a blessing to false gods, it cannot enjoy the land presented to it as God's people, but as it became like the heathen, it shall return again into their countries. With the loss of the "Land of Jehovah," however, is united, as a peculiarly distressing consequence, the loss of the sacrificial service, and of the sanctification in life thereby conditioned. Israel is sent away into the land of impurity. In this the Captivity is like a return to Egypt. Already in this we hear the sigh of the banished after the Holy Land. Those against whom the oburgatory discourse is primarily directed will, it is true, feel least the impossibility of serving God. And yet even they cannot deny their Israelitish character, and least of all in a strange land. That which they now do not wish to do, or to be able to do, will hereafter be the occasion of their bitter sorrow — and thus it ever is.

2. "All nations rejoice over and enjoy a rich harvest (comp. Is. ix. 2), because they see in the bountiful harvest a sign and pledge of the divine favor, demanding gratitude to the Giver. If now the heathen ascribe these gifts to their gods and thank them after their manner, they do this in the ignorance of their hearts, without being specially guilty in so doing, because they live without the light of divine revelation. If, on the contrary, Israel rejoiced in the blessings of harvest like the heathen, and ascribed them to Baal (ii. 7), God could not leave unpunished this denial of his gracious benefits" (Keil). It amounts to the same thing when one generation ascribes such blessings partly to their own labor and partly to "nature," and accordingly its joy is purely "natural," altogether devoid of gratitude to the great Giver, and man-

ifests itself necessarily in all kinds of self-indulgence.

3. When the judgment comes, the falseness of the false prophets becomes manifest. By these are, without doubt, to be understood those who, aping the position of Prophets of Jehovah, came forward as the pretended announcers of the divine will, and as the advisers of the people, especially of the rulers, but in their flattery of the people would pronounce good and justify everything, and therefore predicted prosperity and deliverance (Ezek. xiii. 10), and never uttered a word of earnest rebuke. They were trusted only too well. On the contrary, the true Prophets had to meet everywhere snares and enmity. Men know too late who are their true friends, and who their false.

4. The true prophet must, it is true, enter into God's designs, not merely of mercy, but also of righteous judgment; must announce them, so far as they have been revealed; and he may even desire their fulfillment, in order that a limit may be set to sin, and God's glory be spread. Yet it must be observed that when the prophets invoke judgment, they do not implore the destruction and death of the individual sinner, but only the "political" death, the destruction of a godless kingdom, because it had filed up the measure of its sins and thus became amenable to judgment, concerning which there could be no doubt in the prophet's mind.

5. With respect to Israel's conduct towards God, we are to observe the retrospect of former times (vers. 9, 10, comp. x. 7; xi. 1, 2). The sins of the present are thus shorn of their individuality and shown to form part of a whole complexity of sin. These are only a mode of manifestation, a new phase, of the same spirit, which was before, and had been always, displayed. As with the displays of God's love to Israel, so with the sins of Israel against God. Instead of an atomizing and mechanical view of this subject, we have a dynamic one, which alone is justifiable in the ethical sphere. From this conception of the evil, according to which its several manifestations of a constant fundamental tendency in the minds of a single nation, no great step is needed to reach the assumption of a constant disposition to evil in mankind generally, of hereditary sin, in which the individual with his special offenses only confirms and realizes the sinful disposition of the race.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

WURT. SUMM.: Vers. 1, 2. Sincere Christians should, in the blessings of God, so rejoice in the Lord, as to acknowledge that all good is from Him alone, to whom they must therefore give thanks, and so use them as not abusing them, but employ them to God's glory. Then will God the Lord not cease to do them good.

Ver. 3. STARKE: That is the Lord's land where God is truly worshipped and honored.

Vers. 4, 5. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: When the measure of iniquity is full, God at last takes away the lamp of his Word from its place. Beware, then, you who have the truth, lest darkness fall upon you.

[PUSEY: It is in human nature to neglect to serve God when He wills it, and then to neglect to serve Him when He forbids it. The more solemn the day and the more total man's exclusion, the more manifest God's withdrawal. — M.]

[Ver. 6. MATT. HENRY: Those that think pre-

sumptuously to outrun God's judgments are likely enough to meet their deaths when they had hoped to save their lives. — M.]

Ver. 7. We usually discover too late who are our true friends and who our false.

PEAFF. *Bibelwerk*: False prophets are a token of God's wrath burning over a church or nation.

[PUSEY: The man of the world and the Christian judge of the same things by clear contrary rules, use them for quite contrary ends. The slave of pleasure counts him mad who foregoes it; the wealthy trader counts him mad who gives away profusely. In these days profusion for the love of Christ has been counted a ground for depriving a man of his property. One or the other is mad, and worldlings must count the Christian mad, or they must own themselves to be so most fearfully (Wisdom v. 3-6). The sinner first neglects God; then, as the will of God is brought before him, he willfully disobeys Him; then, when he finds God's will irreconcilably at variance with his own, or when God chastens him, he hates Him, and hates Him greatly. — M.]

Ver. 8. Let it not offend you, if, for the sake of the truth, you must suffer persecution. "Even so persecuted they the prophets who were before you."

Ver. 12. When God is graciously disposed towards us, He is our Light, our Way, our Life, our Love, our Comfort, our Joy, our Shepherd, our Physician, our Bridegroom, our Father, and our Redeemer. If He departs from us, all this is gone, like as when the sun sets and darkness covers all.

SPUR: When the divine wrath has begun to burn, it rises, so to speak, by degrees. And God commonly proceeds by beginning at what is most external to us, whose loss we would not deeply feel, but ever advances further towards that which is dearer and of more moment, until at last He strikes at our very selves. If God is not gracious towards us, He is angry; He can sustain no intermediate relation.

Ver. 15. God refuses at last to grant to unfaithful children even the privileges of his house. He at the same time disinherits them. When God ceases to love us we are lost. Hence nothing is more necessary than the prayer: Withdraw not thy love from us. Nothing is more precious than the power to say: I am persuaded that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Ver. 16. Whole families, even whole nations die out through God's judgments!

C. *Devastation of the Seats of Worship. Destruction of the Kingdom.*

CHAPTER X. 1-15.

- 1 Israel is a thriving vine¹
Which sends forth its fruit;
As its fruit abounded,
It multiplied altars;
According to the prosperity of the land,
The better they made their images.
- 2 Their heart is smooth: now will they make expiation:
He will cut down their altars, he will destroy their images.
- 3 For now they will say:
We have no king,
Because we did not fear God,
And the king — what will he do for us.
- 4 They speak words,
Swearing² falsely and contracting alliances:
And justice grows like the poison-plant
In the furrows of the field.
- 5 For the calves³ of Samaria,
The inhabitants of Samaria will tremble,
For its people mourn for it,
And its idol-priests will tremble for it,
For its glory, that it has departed from it.
- 6 Itself⁴ will be carried to Assyria,
As a present to the warlike king:
Shame will take hold upon Ephraim,
And Israel will be ashamed of its counsel.
- 7 Samaria⁵ is destroyed,
Its king is like a chip on the surface of the water.

- 8 The high places of Aven are devastated,
The sin of Israel,
Thorns and thistles will grow upon its altars,
Then they will say to the mountains: Cover us!
And to the hills: Fall upon us!
- 9 Since the days of Gibeah, thou hast sinned, Israel!
There they stood:
The war against the sons of iniquity⁶ did not reach them in Gibeah,
- 10 As I please, I will fetter them,⁷
And the nations will gather themselves against them,
When I bind them for their two offenses.
- 11 For Ephraim is a well-trained heifer,
Which loves⁸ to thresh:
But I will pass over her fair neck:
I will yoke Ephraim,
Judah shall plough,
Jacob [Ephraim] shall harrow.
- 12 Sow for yourselves according to righteousness,
And reap for yourselves in the (like) measure of mercy!
Break for yourselves (new) soil!
For it is time to seek Jehovah,
Until he come and rain righteousness upon you.
- 13 (Yet) ye have ploughed wickedness,
Ye have reaped iniquity,
Ye have eaten the fruit of lying:
Because thou didst trust in thy way,
In the multitude of thy heroes.
- 14 And the noise of war⁹ has risen among your tribes,¹⁰
And all thy fortresses are destroyed,
As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel in the day of battle,
The mother is dashed upon her children.
- 15 Thus has Bethel¹¹ done to you,
For the evil of your evil [your great evil],
In the early morning [soon] the king of Israel shall be utterly destroyed.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

[1 Ver. 1. — גִּבְעָה is always fem. except here and in 2 Kings iv. 39. It is masc. here as relating to Israel. לֵאמֹר is not strictly pleonastic here, it having the force of the poss. pronoun: its fruit. — M.]

2 Ver. 4. — אֶלְלוֹתָ, though an inf. absol. is here conformed to פְּרִית instead of אֶלְלוֹהָ.

3 Ver. 5. — Wünsche: "עֲגֵלֹתָ." The fem. is surprising, since the calves which were worshipped, really three-year-old steers, appear elsewhere always masc. It cannot be deemed far-fetched to suggest that the fem. is employed somewhat contemptuously and sarcastically."

4 Ver. 6. — אָרַרְךָ with the passive. According to Ewald, § 299 d, the active sense pervades the passive throughout in such a case as this; thus יִבְרֶכְךָ here = one leads it. Fürst is of a different opinion. According to him the primary notion of אָרַר is *being, essence*, and it therefore serves to emphasize the subject. [The former is the prevailing and preferable view. Comp. Green, *Gr.*, § 271, 4 a. The opinion of Fürst seems to have been based upon his theory that there is an affinity between אָרַר (אָרַר) and נָשָׂא, and some other words of similar radicals and significations. — M.]

5 Ver. 7. — מֶלֶכָּהּ, with a fem. suffix, because שָׁמָרִין, as being a city, is fem. On the other hand נִדְמָה has a masc. form because it stands at the beginning of the sentence. The construction here, according to the Masoretic punctuation is either an asyndeton: Samaria and her king, or the latter is explanatory of the former: Samaria, namely, her king (= the whole kingdom). Wünsche adopts the probably preferable view that מֶלֶכָּהּ begins a new sentence.

[6 Ver. 9. — עֲלֵךְ transposed from עֲלֵיךָ. One edition (the Brisian) and many MSS. have the common form מֶלֶךְ. This would be the only case of the occurrence of the transposition. — M.]

7 Ver. 10 — וְאֶפְרַיִם. ו marks the apodosis. The verb אֶפְרַיִם from אָפַר [with daghesh compensative. — M.].

[8 Ver. 11. — אֶת־בִּתְּיָא. The ם is paragogic, with the fem. part. אֶת־בִּתְּיָא. — M.]

[9 Ver. 14. — אֶת־נֶם. The ם is either epenthetic, or it is merely a *mater lectionis*, which is most probable; see Green, *Gr.*, § 11, 1. — M.]

[10 Ver. 14. — A number of MSS. and early editions read אֶת־נֶם instead of אֶת־נֶם. The ancient Versions are claimed as having followed this reading also; but it is more probable that they rendered the plural as sing., the noun being a collective one. — M.]

10 Ver. 15. — Some suppose the בִּתְּיָא to have been omitted before בִּתְּיָא, and the latter to be local.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Comp. Ps. lxxx. 9-12. There is also an allusion to ch. ix. 10, and yet the image is quite differently applied. Israel is represented here not so much as being pleasant in itself and of worth in the sight of Jehovah (and is therefore not compared to fruit), but from the stand-point of its fruitfulness, which, however, was of the wrong kind. Hence even its fruitfulness will be taken away from it (ch. ix. 16). בִּתְּיָא, according to Fürst = blooming (LXX., Syr., Aquila), and thereafter according to Keil: climbing, thriving, after the primary idea of בִּתְּיָא: to pour out, to run itself out, here = climb upwards. [Fürst compares the Arab. *bakka*: to bloom. If this sense is the correct one, this is the only case of the occurrence of this verb. — M.] The meaning: empty, unsuitable. שָׁתַּר: to place, set = prepares, furnishes fruit for itself.

Ver. 2. Their heart is smooth. The expression is elsewhere employed of the tongue, lips, words = deceitful, false, not sincere (devoted to God). The explanation: divided, is false, for the Kal means: to divide, transitive. גִּדְּרָה is properly: to cut off the head by striking the neck. [Henderson: "It is properly a sacrificial term. It is here, with much force, used metonymically, in application to the destruction of the altars on which the animals themselves were offered." For the force of גִּדְּרָה see on ver. 15. — M.]

Ver. 3. They will then see that they have no king any longer, because they forsake Jehovah, i. e., none appointed by God, and none, therefore, who can help them. עָשָׂה: to do = to profit.

Ver. 4 explains especially the smoothness of the heart of ver. 2. They speak words, mere words, without sincerity. The following infinitives avouch the statement. The covenants are such as want truth; they were concluded (with foreign nations) only for the sake of an expected advantage, not from real friendship. רָאָשׁ, poison, here = poison-plant. מִשְׁפָּט. Most take this = judgment. A force far-reaching and seizing upon everything, is supposed to be described. But the divine judgment cannot be compared to a vile plant outgrowing everything else. Hence we must remain by the meaning: justice. The thought is manifest: If justice prevailed, the land would be like a well-appointed field, but it is now like one that is neglected, and in which therefore poison plants spring up, because justice was prostrated. By a somewhat bold figure justice, when falsely administered, when perverted and abused, is compared to a poisonous plant. It has been changed into it, as it were. Comp. Amos vi. 12. [Henderson adheres to the former explanation; Pusey approves the latter. It is also preferred by Cowles, who illustrates it from Amos v. 7; vi. 12, and sup-

poses that Hosea adapted the image from its use by his predecessor. — M.]

Ver. 5. The punishment can therefore not linger. Already the inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the golden calves. Keil: The plural עֲבֹדֹת stands here as indefinite and general, without our being obliged to infer that several golden calves had been set up in Bethel. A sing. at all events immediately follows. Wünsche: "The Prophet is thinking of all the calves in the northern kingdom which were imitations of the chief golden idol erected at Bethel. By these imitations al Israel had, in a certain manner, become a Beth-Aven." Beth-Aven. See ch. iv. 15. Its people, — its priests. The suffixes refer to the idol-god. What a strong accusation! The people are named the people of the calf-god. יִיְיָ usually = to rejoice, but here (employed for the sake of the assurance with גִּלְיָה) = חָיִל, to writhe in anguish, to mourn, parallel to גִּלְיָה. On its account, also refers to the calf, and is more nearly explained by the words, for its glory, i. e., the glory and the divine *nimbus* which were associated with the calf-worship. This glory will depart from the calf, where it cannot give protection from the enemy, and will itself be carried away.

Ver. 6. Itself also, namely, the golden calf. [See Gram. note]. Its counsel, namely, that which itself gave to itself, namely, to apply to Assyria. [On the phrase: warlike king, see ch. v. 13. — M.]

Vers. 7, 8. The kingdom of Samaria falls along with its gods. [See Gram. note.] The image of a chip on the surface of the water denotes the untraceable disappearance, and probably also the violent destruction = as a chip upon the water is driven on by the stream and so disappears. קָמֹר.

אֲנִי are literally: the heights of evil. But Aven, in allusion to Beth-Aven = Bethel; for its high places were heights of evil, since the image-worship which rose in Bethel = Beth-Aven, was practiced there. The sin of Israel is in apposition to the high-places, etc. Those high places were the sin of Israel, because it was by means of them that Israel sinned. Then they say to the mountains, etc. This expresses the hopelessness of despair. They would rather be buried by the mountains, than undergo the afflictions of such a time. Applied in Luke xxiii. 30 and Rev. vi. 16.

Ver. 9. From the days of Gibeah. These days, referred to already in ch. iv. 9 (see that passage), are regarded as the beginning of Israel's sinning. Others take the words comparatively: more than in the days of Gibeah. [So Cowles: This opinion is not common. — M.] The following words are difficult. Ewald: There they (the Israelites) stood. Should not war against the sons of impiety reach them in Gibeah? Keil: There, that is, in the same sin, they stood, i. e., remained; the war against the sons of iniquity did not reach them in Gibeah, that is, the war

once waged by the other tribes of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin, on account of the infamous deed of the men of Gibeah, did not reach the Ten Tribes, *i. e.*, they were destroyed by no such war like others of the Israelites, though they did not less deserve such a fate, therefore God will punish them now. But the translation is forced. Wünsche perhaps explains better, though much might be said against his translation also: They stood there—that war might not reach them in Gibeah—beside the sons of iniquity. The passage accordingly says in what the sin of Israel in the days of Gibeah had consisted, namely in this, that they, the Benjamites, had stood by the Levites in Gibeah = the sons of iniquity against the rest of the Israelites. Esth. ix. 16; viii. 11 are cited in proof that עִמָּד with עַל has the sense of standing by [assisting]. [The translation assigned above to Keil, which is also that of E. V., is approved by Cowles. Instead of being “forced” it is evidently the most simple and natural. Henderson translates: shall not the war against the unjust overtake them in Gibeah? See Textual note. — M.]

Ver. 10. בְּאֶרְצִי: in my desire = when or as I will. [Keil: “An anthropomorphic description of the severity of the chastisement.”] To take part in the infliction of chastisement, nations will be gathered against Israel. The reference is to the war against the sons of iniquity (ver. 9). [This reference is not clear unless the construction of Ewald and Henderson given above be adopted. — M.] The last hemistich is difficult. The Kethibh is עֵינוֹהֶם. According to Fürst from עֵין in the sense of nothingness = אֵין, therefore in the concrete: idol-image. Keri עֲנוּהֶם = sins. According to the first explanation, idol-images = calves. The latter is probably correct as referred by Keil to the double sin of apostasy from Jehovah and from the royal house of David. The whole clause would therefore be: When I bind them to their two transgressions (namely, by punishing them) so that they must drag them, so to speak, as an oppressive burden. The sense may, however, be simply: on account of their two transgressions. The image of the heifer in the next verse is anticipated here. [The explanation last given is now usually followed and is the most probable. Raschi and Ewald translate: before their two eyes, *i. e.*, openly. The rendering: furrows, in E. V. follows the Targum and the majority of the Rabbins. — M.]

Ver. 11. תִּלְמָדָהּ, taught, trained for work. Which loves to thresh: According to many expositors this refers to the circumstance that threshing is the lighter work, in which, besides, the heifer may eat at her pleasure, and hence is an image of the pleasant and prosperous condition of Israel. According to others the *tert. comp.* is the treading, and hence the victorious power and dominion of Israel, as under Jeroboam II. would be represented with the accessory notion of a violent treatment of those who had been subdued. But now the situation of Israel would be different. [This is the more common and certainly the preferable explanation. So Henderson, Cowles, and other English Expositors. — M.] I will pass over her fair neck—in a hostile sense = I will place a yoke upon her. טוֹב: beauty, alluding

to her fatness. אֶרְצִי: I will cause to be driven = I will yoke, namely, for ploughing and harrowing. The compulsory endurance of severe toil appears here in complete contrast to the preceding situation. Judah shall share the same fate. This is mentioned only incidentally and in comparison with Ephraim; but the similar lot of the former is constantly alluded to. Jacob, here mentioned along with Judah, probably = Ephraim. לוֹ shall harrow for himself, forcibly expressing strongly that this toil is not spared him. [So also Keil; but this explanation seems unnatural. Others, as Fausset, translate: break the clods before him; but the preposition must be unduly forced to make it convey such a sense. The best way is to regard it as a pleonasm. Comp. Gen. xii. 1; Job xv. 28; Sol. Song ii. 17, and many other passages. — M.]

Vers. 12, 13. The image of ploughing and harrowing leads to that of sowing and reaping. But the discourse turns from the threatening, which holds out the prospect of punishment, to an exhortation to return (in order to escape punishment), which is then (ver. 13) supported by an allusion to the present conduct of the people (under the same figure). According to righteousness. The divine righteousness, by its being sown, *i. e.*, by its operation, should be their determining principle, be their norm and standard. הֶסֶד is then to be understood of the mercy of God. The harvest will, if they sow thus, be determined by the mercy of God (not merely by desert), shall be bountiful and of good quality; this mercy itself shall be the harvest. Keil understands זֶרְעוֹ to mean justice towards their fellow-men, הֶסֶד of (condescending) love (towards the despised), and explains the clause thus: sow righteousness as the seed; the fruit will be love. But זֶרַע has too clearly the signification “the divine reward of Israel’s religious and moral sowing” (Wünsche). כִּירְרוֹ, to plough new soil. The words go back now beyond the sowing. Israel does not merely need to scatter the true seed; it needs a new soil and must therefore begin anew. The explanation of זֶרַע is again difficult. It could be taken in the sense of salvation, blessing, so that the bestowal of salvation and blessings would be the consequence of seeking the Lord. In not a few passages this signification is most appropriate, and the usual meaning will not suit here. We expect the mention not of a moral quality, but of its consequences. Keil explains: “God rains righteousness not merely in giving the power to gain it, as He gives rain for the growth of the seed (comp. Is. xlv. 3), but also because He himself must create it and inform the soul with it by his Spirit” (Ps. li. 12). This in itself is quite true, but is it proper to speak of raining or pouring out righteousness? This differs altogether from the expression: to pour out the Spirit. [This figurative expression would be quite characteristic of the style of Hosea. It would be only another instance of the boldness and freedom of his imagery. The figure is double, including also a metonymy, in which righteousness, the effect of the outpouring of the Spirit, is put for the cause itself. Many, following the Syr., Targ., and Vulg., take יִרְהוֹ = He will teach. — M.]

Ver. 13, as it now stands, says that iniquity

has been ploughed; iniquity is the soil which they cultivated, and the seed and the harvest corresponded to it. From wickedness there resulted wickedness. One step further still than the harvest is taken in the following words: **Ye have eaten the fruit of lying** = the fruit which deceives. The result of this conduct is nothing, no profit but disaster and ruin. The cause is still more specially indicated; in other words, the false conduct of Israel is characterized: **since thou didst trust**, etc., namely, instead of in Jehovah.

Ver. 14. **Among thy peoples**. People either = military host, or as in the Pentateuch = tribe. **As Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel**. This fact is not known from history, and the explanation is therefore uncertain. According to the usual opinion Shalman is a contraction for Shalmaneser, the name of the Assyrian king who destroyed the kingdom of the Ten Tribes¹ (2 Kings xvii. 6). First understands an older Assyrian king before Pul, since the name Shalmaneser never appears shortened to Shalman, and the Assyrians never engaged in a destructive battle with Israel, and Shalmaneser destroyed Samaria forty years later (after Hosea). Beth-arbel, according to him, is Beth-arbel near Gargamela, made famous later by the victory of Alexander the Great. Keil supposes that the Prophet, since the conquest of such a distant city would scarcely have been known to the Israelites, could not have held up the destruction of this city before them as an example, and would therefore understand the Arbel in Upper Galilee, between Saphoris and Tiberias, mentioned in 1 Macc. ix. 2, and later by Josephus.

Ver. 15. The subject of **עוֹלָתְךָ** is either Shalman (if = Shalmaneser) or Jehovah, of whom the Assyrian king is the instrument, or (as the Targum and also Keil) Bethel, because that city prepared the way for the ruin which befell Israel. **Evil of your evil** = the most extreme evil (comp.

Ewald, § 313 c.). **בֹּקֶר** = in the early morning, probably = early, not: at the time when prosperity shall seem to be dawning or near (Keil). There is not the remotest hint of this in the context. **The king of Israel**, naturally collective = the kingdom of Israel.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. "In the midst of the calf-worship established by Jeroboam, the Israelites still would keep before them the God of Israel; but this resulted in a divided heart, a halting between two opinions (ver. 2). And when their prosperity became undermined by God's judgments, the smiting of a guilty conscience told them of their sin; but that was not a repentance unto life. The improvement of circumstances which the Israelites sought in the schism of Jeroboam cost them dear. For, since he led them away from the fear of God, the help which was to have been expected from his government was already undermined. The sinner awakened by chastisement discovers this deception of sin much more readily than he discovers his obligation to return to God with a contrite heart" (Rieger).

2. One chief element in God's judgment upon Israel was the destruction of the seats of worship (comp. ch. viii.), and here, more particularly, the

carrying away of the idol-gods by the enemy (vers. 5, 6). Both the nothingness of idolatry and the great guilt of Israel are here unmistakably exhibited. With this are connected the destruction of the kingdom (vers. 7, 15) and the conquest of the country. Freedom is lost; instead of it comes slavery (ver. 11). The anguish of the judgment is most forcibly depicted (ver. 8) in expressions which, in Luke xxiii. 30, are employed to set forth the distress occasioned by the destruction of Jerusalem, but, in Rev. vi. 16, to describe the terror of "the great day of the Lord." Thus the description of the judgment announced by Hosea is of such a character as to be a type of the final judgment, even though Hosea himself does not designate it "the day of the Lord." The distress of a late repentance is expressed in ver. 3. It is a part of the judgment, since it consists in vain self-reproaches, all too late. In our chapter again the necessary connection between the judgment and sin is emphasized by the image of the sowing and the reaping: from an evil sowing nothing can come but an evil harvest. The expected reward must only be a manifest deception: "the fruit of lying."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. This was the result of God's mercy. God makes the vine and also gives the growth and the precious fruit. And as long as God's favor lasts, so long are men like such a plant. A beautiful image of a life blessed by God, and as true of nations as of individuals. But it is a deplorable thing that man usually cannot bear his prosperity, and that, instead of being led by God's goodness to repentance and nearer to God, he rather forgets Him (see at ch. ii. 9). The fruits are not given back to God. Thus is God often defrauded of the fruits which men owe to Him; and "idols," the world, and the flesh, enjoy what are his.

[MATTHEW HENRY: What we do not rightly employ we may justly expect to be emptied of. It is a great affront to God and a great abuse of his goodness, when, the more mercies we receive from Him, the more sins we commit against Him. — M.]

Ver. 2. The state of the heart is the source of the evil. As long as this does not belong to Him, so long will men rob Him of his own. God will have the heart as his alone, and suffers none to share that possession.

Vers. 5, 6. [PUSEY: Without the grace of God men mourn, not their sins, but their idols.]

FAUSSET: Separated from God all human power is weakness, and all apparent stability fluctuating and perishing as the foam. The fear of God is the only true basis of solidity and permanence. — M.]

Ver. 8. A fearful expression of the despair with which impiety shall at last end: a type of the anguish of the lost at the last judgment.

[FAUSSET: Surely it is infinitely better to pray to Jesus now to "cover" our transgressions with the blood of his atonement, than through neglect of this to have to cry to the mountains at last, "Fall on us and cover us." Our prayer to Jesus, if offered in faith now, shall surely be heard; but prayer to the mountains then shall be in vain. — M.]

Ver. 11. BERLENBURGER BIBLE: The pride which exalts itself and does not fear before Him

¹ [The Assyrian monuments show that it was Sargon, the son of Shalmaneser, who destroyed Samaria. The passage cited above simply speaks of "the king of Assyria." — M.]

who is the God of the whole earth, must be abased. O, that Ephraim would submit himself and his neck to the yoke of the gentle and humble Lamb!

Ver. 12. BERLENBURGER BIBLE: When a man redeems uncultivated soil he restores it to the one to whom it rightly belongs. For he is the only one who can redeem it. We have received from God his soil, and as we have no strength to make it profitable, it remains untilld. But as soon as God sees that we would break up this uncultivated ground, and we, feeling our inability, seek help in Him, He ploughs it Himself with the ploughshare of the cross. Then He sows righteousness in it, and makes it fruitful in itself, that it may bear much fruit in Christ.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Let them break up the fallow ground; let them cleanse their hearts from

all corrupt affections and lusts which are as weeds and thorns, and let them be humbled for their sins, and be of a broken and contrite spirit in the sense of them; let them be full of sorrow and shame at the remembrance of them, and prepare to receive the divine precepts, as the ground that is ploughed is to receive the seed that it may take root. See Jer. iv. 3.

FAUSSET: Grace used well is rewarded gratuitously with more grace. — M.]

Ver. 13. The fruit of sin is ever the "fruit of lies." For sin always deceives those who serve it. Going in our own ways and trusting to human power is shown especially to be deceptive.

[FAUSSET: Only when we mistrust ourselves and trust in the Lord and his righteousness alone, are we safe, justified, and blessed. — M.]

III. MERCY.

CHAPTER XI.

God cannot utterly destroy Israel, whom He has always loved, though they have so basely requited Him, but will again show Mercy unto them.

CHAPTER XI. 1-11.

- 1 WHEN Israel was a youth, then I loved Him,
And out of Egypt I called my son.
- 2 They [the Prophets] called them; so (often) they turned away from them;
They sacrificed to the Baals,
They burnt incense to the idol-gods.
- 3 And I led Ephraim along,¹—
He took them² upon his arm; —
Yet they knew not that I healed them.
- 4 With the bands of a man I drew them,
With cords of love;
And I was towards them,
As those that would raise the yoke-strap over their jaws,
And I reached out to them to eat.³
- 5 They will not return to the land of Egypt,
But Assyria,⁴ it is their king,
For they refused to return.
- 6 And the sword goes its rounds in their cities,
And destroys their bars [defenses],
And devours them for their devices.
- 7 And my people incline to fall away from me;⁵
They [the Prophets] call them (to look) upwards,
All together they refuse to raise themselves.
- 8 How should I give thee up, Ephraim?
How should I surrender thee, Israel?
How should I make thee like Admah,
Set thee like Zeboim?
My heart is turned within me;
My repentings are kindled together.
- 9 I will not execute the fierceness of my anger,
I will not again destroy Ephraim:
For I am God and not man;

- In the midst of thee is a Holy One,
And I will not come in wrath.
10 They will follow the Lord :
Like a lion He will roar ;
Yea He will roar, and children from the sea will come trembling [hasten] ;
11 Will hasten like a bird from Egypt,
And like a dove from Assyria :
Then will I make them dwell in their houses, saith Jehovah.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 3. — תִּרְגְּלֵתִי, from תִּרְגַּל = תִּרְגַּל, Hiphil from רָגַל : to make to walk, to lead, construed with לְ, [Comp. Jer. xii. 5 ; xxii. 15, and see Ewald, § 122 a, Green, § 94 a. The corresponding Syriac (*shargel*) means : to mislead. — M.]

2 Ver. 3. — קָחָם instead of לָקָחָם.

3 Ver. 4. — נָחַט, usually regarded as first fut. Hiphil, from נָחַט, instead of נָחַט = and I inclined myself. Others take it to be an adverb : softly, gently. אֶלֵּי would then be best connected with it : and gently towards them, I gave them food. אֶלֵּי for אֶלֵּי.

4 Ver. 5. — נִשְׁאָר is adversative. הִנֵּה emphasizes Assyria in contrast to Egypt.

5 Ver. 7. — מִשְׁבַּחִי. The suffix is here used in a subjective sense = apostasy from me.

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Jehovah calls to mind the love which He had displayed to Israel ages before. But it was rewarded with unfaithfulness, and they must be the more severely punished. See Ex. iv. 22 f. Israel was Jehovah's first-born son, because they were chosen as the people of his inheritance. Hence the love of God, which redeemed them from Egypt, in order to give to their fathers the Land of Promise. On the citation of this passage in Matt. ii. 15 f., see the Doctrinal Section.

Ver. 2. They called, namely, the prophets.

As the prophets called, so (קָרָא) they refused to listen — turned away from their (the prophets') faces. קָרָא, see ch. ii. 15. [Henderson : "The use of the verb : to call, in the preceding verse, suggested the idea of the subsequent messages which had been delivered to the Israelites by the prophets, to which Hosea now appeals, in order to contrast with the means which had been employed for their reformation, the obstinate character of their rebellion." — M.]

Ver. 3. A further description of the love of God displayed towards Israel, chiefly in the march through the wilderness. He took them upon his arms. The sudden transition to the third person is to be explained from the fact that it is the prophet that is speaking in the name of Jehovah, and that this can therefore easily pass over into a discourse by Jehovah. Comp. Deut. i. 31 ; Ex. xv. 26, for the same thoughts.

Ver. 4. With bands of a man = such as those with which men, especially children, would be led, opposed to ropes, with which beasts are tied, = cords of love in the next hemistich. "This image leads on to the similar one of the yoke laid upon rattle to yoke them in for work." In this image gentle treatment is implied ; for comparison is made with one who takes the yoke, or rather the strap with which it is secured, and which passes through the mouth, and draws it back over the jaws so that the animal may eat conveniently. Jehovah in his conduct towards Israel is like such a gentle master. Literally : I was to them as those who raise the

yoke over their jaws. But the opinion of Keil is far-fetched, who thinks that there is a definite allusion to the commands laid upon the people, which God had made light for them, partly by many displays of his mercy, and partly by the means of grace in their religion. The *tert. comp.* is simply the gentleness, the kind consideration shown to them in his dealings towards them. [Though, of course, this general reference includes, with other manifestations of kindness, the special application made by Keil. For the construction and rendering of the last clause, see the Grammatical Note. — M.]

Ver. 5. They shall not return to the land of Egypt. An apparent contradiction of ch. viii. 13 ; ix. 3. But, as may be seen there, Egypt is in those passages only a type of the land of bondage. But here Egypt is employed in the literal sense, just as in ver. 1, to which our verse alludes. "The people of Jehovah shall not return to the land from which He called them, in order that it may not seem as though the design of the exodus and the march through the desert were frustrated through their impenitence. But they shall enter into another bondage." To return, namely, to Jehovah.

Ver. 6. חֲזָלָה, from חָזַל, to describe a circle, to move in a circle, as it were, to make the rounds ; spoken of a sword = to rage. Their bars, the bars of the strong cities = their gates. These will be destroyed, and the cities be captured, and laid waste. [Others, as Gesenius and Cowles, take the word in a metaphorical sense, which is frequent : rulers, defenders. But the former is preferable, as being more directly connected with the *strong cities*. E. V. adopts the first derived sense of the word : branches. Calvin, following the same view, interpreted branches as = villages, the branches of the cities. In this he is followed by Fausset. — M.]

Ver. 7 returns again to the sin of the people. אֶלֵּי is here used intransitively : hang over, to incline. אֶלֵּי : above (comp. vii. 16). They (the prophets) call them. יִרְוּם, here probably intransitive (the strengthened Kal) = raise themselves, strive to rise. [The passage may be thus

paraphrased: "My people are bent on turning away from me. Though the prophets call upon them to look above (to the Most High), yet with one accord they refuse to raise themselves up." — M.]

Ver. 8. Still Jehovah cannot utterly blot out his people. The love with which He has loved them still endures and breaks forth strongly. **How could I give thee up, etc.** This is still at first a continuation of the threatening. Chastisement even to utter destruction, is justified = how I should, how just it would be to give thee up! But with this expression thus justifying the punishment, the threatening is exhausted and satisfied. It is just the contemplation of the great measure of the suffering which would really be deserved which leads to the feeling that such punishment, however justifiable, cannot be executed, and that it shall be restrained = I should do this, but how terrible it would be! no, it cannot be. Thus the threatening having reached its climax, brings itself to its end. Others translate: how should I? = how should it be possible, that, etc.? = I cannot do so. But then there is no transition from ver. 7 to ver. 8. [This, the most common view, is certainly correct. There is no need of any intermediate words between the threatening and the relenting. The true theory with regard to the relation between God and the people is this, that God must be considered as all the time melting with love towards the people whom He must reject. Hence the frequent and seemingly unprepared words of promise in the book, suddenly appearing after long denunciations. No transition is needed. It is supplied by that constant yearning love of which wrath and mercy are the negative and the positive poles. The other view has to encounter the very difficulty which it seeks to obviate. For the transition would only be more abrupt from the justification of extreme punishment to its abandonment; and the difficulty is greater, because such transition would occur in the middle of a verse, and not with the beginning of a new one. — M.] Like Admah, — like Zebaim: comp. Deut. xxix. 22, where these two cities are expressly mentioned, as having been destroyed together with Sodom and Gomorrah, which in Gen. xix. 24 stand alone. **My heart is changed within me** — so that wrath has disappeared. [For a like use of the preposition עַל, comp. Jer. viii. 18; Ps. xlii. 6, 12; xliii. 5. — M.]

Ver. 9. I will not return to destroy Ephraim. "After my heart has been once changed with the resolve not to punish, I will not change it again." This is supported by the consideration that God is God and not a changeable man. עֵירִי בָּעִיר is here probably = glow, heat of wrath. [E. V. has: into the city, which would have been בָּעִיר, and which gives no pertinent sense. This rendering is now almost universally abandoned, but it is, strange to say, approved by Pusey and Fanshett, the latter of whom speaks of the other translation as held "needlessly." — M.]

Ver. 10. The consequence of the Lord's compassion; He will call, and the people, following Him, will return home from banishment. **They shall go after the Lord.** This probably involves both the changed, converted heart, and the walking in God's ways thence resulting. Will roar like a lion. The point of comparison is not the terrifying influence of the sound, but its extent. It reaches far and near. Thus must the cry be when it calls the people to their restoration. Or is it

implied that these displays of mercy towards Israel are coupled with judgments upon the heathen! Hosea does not allude to this elsewhere. Trembling will be a consequence of this call, but it implies chiefly haste united with anxiety not to neglect the summons, and therefore the eagerness of obedience. Hence also the comparison with birds.

Ver. 11. **From the sea** = from the west, as well as from Egypt and Assyria. The notion is from all quarters of the earth (comp. Is. xi. 11).

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Israel became "God's son," by virtue of their being chosen as God's peculiar people, according to Ex. iv. 22 f. The bestowal of this privilege, confirmed by the deliverance from Egypt, and sealed by the ratification at Sinai, forms the first step in God's redemptive work, which is completed by the incarnation of his Son for the redemption of the world. The whole development and leading of Israel as God's people terminate upon Christ not as though Israel were begotten as the Son of God, but in such a way as that the relation which the Lord of Heaven and earth established and preserved between Himself and this people prepared and foreshadowed the union of God and Man, and laid the way for the Incarnation of his Son by training this people as a vessel of the Divine mercy. All the important events in Israel's history bore upon this, and thereby became types and actual prophecies of the life of Him, in whom the reconciliation of God and man should be effected, and the union of God with the human race unfold itself as a Personal Unity. In this sense is the second half of ver. 1 quoted in Matt. ii. 15, as a prophecy of Christ (Keil). But here we must stop. The further remark of Keil, in justification of the reference of this passage to Christ, goes too far and is not direct, when he says that it was made "because the residence in Egypt and the leading out from it had the same significance in the unfolding of Christ's life, as they had for the people of Israel. As Israel in Egypt, free from contact with the Canaanites, grew into a nation, so was the child Jesus concealed in Egypt from the enmity of Herod."

2. There is here presented to Israel in an affecting manner the love with which God had assumed the care of them in their beginnings, "when they were still young," and made them what they were. And such love is represented as being so tender, all-considerate, helpful, and advancing, that it finds its image only in the love of a father or mother to a child. Jehovah called Israel his son in their early days, when He brought them out of Egypt. Ex. iv. 22 f. He had always acted towards them as became that relation, and displayed to them the love of a father toward his child, even his youngest child. As Jehovah's love and faithfulness to Israel in the years of their manhood finds its fitting symbol only in the love and faithfulness of a husband, so his love and care of Israel in their childhood is compared with the solicitous, tender love of a father. So much the more inexcusable then is the conduct of Israel towards God, the opposition which they displayed towards Him from the beginning. This base ingratitude characterized them continually, and does also in the present. Their present conduct is only the direct continuation of the former. Observe the description of such conduct of Israel toward their God in ver. 2

idolatry before the very eyes of the God who had displayed such love to them; ver. 7: failure to recognize God's purposes of salvation; see also vers. 7, 9. A special proof of Jehovah's love was the sending of the prophets; they call the people upwards — that they should return to God, but they will not raise themselves; they remain below, averse from God.

3. No wonder, therefore, if a people, who reward so basely and mistake the love of God, are visited by Him with the severest judgments (comp. vers. 6, 8). But retributive and punitive justice finds in our Prophet, as we may satisfy ourselves in every chapter, where accusation and threatening are peeled forth incessantly, such appalling expression, that we can no longer decline the question: "Are not these things spoken revengefully? is it not a spirit of vindictiveness that has inspired such words?" It cannot be claimed that human revenge bears any part here, for it is not the offering of personal injuries of which the prophet announces the punishment, but he is indignant in God's behalf, over Israel's sins against God, and announces their punishment. In this, moreover, it is to be borne in mind that the prophet was never a mere passive organ (as the mechanical inspiration theory would have it) of the prophetic utterances, that his own faculties certainly were not at the time overborne, but were elevated, and that these announcements of judgment in the midst of a ruined generation are to be regarded as energetic expressions of the life of faith, faith in the Holy One of Israel. On the other hand, the subjectivity of the prophet is not to be unduly emphasized, as though his purely human feelings and emotions were really the source of these threatenings. We must hold to the truth that the prophets were heralds of that which was revealed to them by the Spirit of God (comp. ch. vi. 5), and that their separate efficiency was exerted only by completely entering by faith into this divine revelation, in their affirmation of it through faith. But the question then assumes this form: Though the Prophet himself does not merit the reproach of a selfish spirit, should not this reproach so much the rather fall upon God Himself, whose (conscious) organ the prophet was? But it is evident that the retribution announced is to be sent in a spirit of strict justice; it is to be a punishment of sin justly deserved. The punishment is closely related to the sins rebuked, and in close connection with them; it is punishment and not vengeance, which usually exceeds the measure of desert. But certainly we are not merely to trace back these threatenings to a dead law of just recompense; the punishment is not merely in accordance with the moral order of the world, according to which sin is followed by its own punishment. It is a personal action, as certainly as the infliction and the threatenings proceed from a personal God. And thus the course of action is not and cannot be unaccompanied by personal "*πάθος*" or feeling. But this feeling is the emotion of love, love grieved, vilely disowned and rejected. It is true that it must be angry, that it cannot be content without being reciprocated, but must be most intimately stirred up, and the greater, the more deeply seated it is, the more it seeks the good of its object, the more conscious it is that it has neglected nothing, and has been to blame in nothing. For this very reason the punishment assumes the appearance of revenge, and even wears its garments, while in truth it is only sin that is meeting with its deserved punishment according to an inner necessity, and not as the consequence of arbitrary

passion. And as this love of God is unselfish and pure and seeks only the good of its object, so this "revenge" of God bears, so to speak, its corrective, that is, its aim in itself. The threatening has, then, a fearfully wide range, and is uttered with a violence which has something painful in it, since the Holy God, free, on his part, from all blame and neglect, appears against the sinner, upon whom alone the responsibility lies. But He does not simply display his anger; He does not cease to love. His wrath does not find its satisfaction in itself by the punishment or destruction of the unfaithful loved one. Actual destruction, which vengeance would demand, is never undertaken. In the background of the threatenings stands the full and flowing stream of love in assurances of mercy and compassion, which, though made in expectation that the people will return, are yet made before such return takes place, and for the purpose of promoting that end. How little the Law, though proceeding from God's well-intentioned love towards Israel, realized its aim, is manifest; Israel had completely broken the covenant founded upon it, and instead of showing themselves to be worthy of the promises attached to it, only rendered themselves amenable to the curse, which they must bear unto the uttermost. Thus love appears in the form of free grace, compassionating the unworthy and coming forth to meet them, so leading to the stand-point of the New Covenant. Hence all these promises, rising up behind the severe threatenings of judgment, are rightly to be regarded as Messianic, even though they are not outwardly marked as such. That an actual annihilation of Israel is not intended, but that the prediction of punishment — thus revealing its origin in pure love which thinks of its object alone, and thus being distinguished from all self-avenging — halts before the last step is reached, has notably been clearly expressed already by the Prophet in his reference to the "remnant" that is still left. It finds in our chapter also its clear expression in ver. 8. Jehovah could and should give up Israel like Admah and Zeboim (not merely destroy the kingdom, deliver it over to Assyria), but He will not do so; and just when the threatening reaches its height, the assurance of fullest mercy breaks forth, and is expressed beautifully in vers. 8-11. If God's love in the beginning of his interest in Israel was something great and exalted (vers. 1-4), it is something greater now, as being in the form of compassion (vers. 9, 10), in which He refuses to give up his people, all unworthy as they had become of the love He had shown them (comp. ver. 11). A return to Jehovah is then announced as the fruit of this compassion, and the removal of the state of subjection to punishment by a restoration to the inheritance they had trifled away is promised as its manifestation. No further description of the future deliverance is as yet given.

4. As to the fulfillment of this promise, see the remarks on chs. i. and ii. It may suffice to repeat here that we are not to hold to any fulfillment which would contradict the actual course of God's revelation. Hence we must not think of a future return of the external Israel into their own land from Assyria, if it were only from the consideration that Assyria exists no longer, and Israel is no longer in bondage to such a nation, and we cannot take the one (Israel, the Holy Land, the return) as literal, and the other (Assyria, captivity) as figurative. We must rather say, from the stand-point of the fulfillment of the Old Testament, i. e., from the stand-point of the New Testament, and in ac-

cordance with the actual course of events: the compassionate mercy of God towards his faithless people, which the Prophet sees win the victory over wrath, has been revealed in Christ — but still as being far greater than he sees it; what is clear to him is only the *σκιὰ* of that which in Christ has actually occurred, and what is still going on, in the forgiveness of sin and deliverance from its curse through free grace. The Prophet hopes for this in behalf of his people Israel, but only because they are God's people. But it will be true of all who shall become God's people too, even though they be not of Israel; they will experience this compassionate favor of God, which is essentially identical with the love, in which God has chosen to Himself a people (from the nations), and completes it so that it realizes its purpose in spite of the breach of the covenant on the part of men, manifested in opposition to the Law and apostasy from God. The voice of mercy, which shall resound so powerfully, and towards which those hasten who stand under God's judgment, has reached far and wide through the Gospel, and will again be sounded forth, when Christ shall gather his own from all ends of the earth, and portion out to them the everlasting inheritance which they had forfeited by sin.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. Thou also hast experienced such love of God from thy childhood's years, in temporal and yet more in spiritual things. This love of God is an incontestable truth. It is as important as it is necessary to be reminded of it continually.

RIEGER: God delights to trace back in his Word and in man's conscience everything to its first beginning.

[FAUSSET: God, by sending the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of his people (Gal. iv. 6) as the spirit of adoption, calls them his, while they are still in the Egypt of this world. Indeed He separates them to Himself from the womb, and calls them by his grace, as He did Paul (Gal. i. 15. — M.)]

Ver. 2. RIEGER: God is ever calling men back to their first love: but one goes to his farm, another to his merchandise, and most to their worldly idols.

Ver. 3. God's condescension to all our needs. He knows our weakness and treats us accordingly. We must be led along and taken by the arm; else we do not advance, but stumble and fall every moment.

Ver. 4. STARKE: God throws over us the cords of love even to day, when He calls us through the preaching of his Word, gives us his sacraments, promises and supplies us with every good thing, and visits us with precious afflictions: so we would pray that God would draw us further still after Himself.

RIEGER: God directs us according to our weakness and the riches of his love. And when He must press us with a yoke, He gives us something with it that helps us to bear it, and leaves us at least food and clothing. And He would warn us against falling back in our pride upon our own help, and neglecting to wait for his counsel. But as Israel was always inclined to turn again to Egypt, and would seek help there against God's judgments, so does self-sufficient man always act, resorting to everything rather than submit to the counsel of God.

[FAUSSET: The Son of God becomes *man*, in order to draw *men* as such by the cords of sympathy, as partaking of a common nature with us. His bands of love sit so lightly on those who wear them that they are no hindrance to us in enjoying all that is really good for us, and which God has so richly laid before us. — M.]

Ver. 7. We are called upwards continually: and yet we will not go! All calling upward is then in vain! Our flesh draws us downwards like a weight of lead, and neutralizes the drawings of the Spirit upwards.

Vers. 8, 9. STARKE: God is disposed, when angry, quite differently from men. Men are intent upon vengeance, but God upon reconciliation.

RIEGER: The thought that we have to do with God and not with man, makes it often difficult to our terrified conscience, to seek and believe in the forgiveness of sins. But this is merely a motive to the divine magnanimity to bestow richer favors upon us.

[MATTHEW HENRY: Those who submit to the influence may take the comfort of God's holiness.]

B. SECOND DISCOURSE.

CHAPTERS XII.—XIV.

I. *Accusation.*

CHAPTER XII.

- 1 Ephraim has surrounded me with lies,
And the house of Israel with deceit;
And Judah still vacillates with God,
With the faithful holy One.¹
- 2 Ephraim feeds upon the wind and pursues the east wind;
Every day it increases violence and lying,
And they make a covenant with Assyria,
And oil [as a gift] is carried to Egypt.

- 3 Jehovah has a contest with Judah
And (He has) to punish Jacob according to his ways,
According to his works he will reward him.
- 4 In the womb he seized his brother by the heel,
And in his (manly) vigor he strove with God.
- 5 He wrestled against the angel and prevailed,
He wept and made supplication unto Him:
He found him in Bethel and then He spoke with us.¹
- 6 And Jehovah, God of Hosts,
Jehovah is his memorial (name).
- 7 And thou, turn thou unto thy God,
Observe mercy and justice,
And wait upon thy God continually!
- 8 Canaan — in his hand (are) the balances of deceit:
He loveth to oppress.
- 9 And Ephraim says: surely I have become rich,
I have found wealth for myself,
All my gains shall not discover transgression² in me,
Which (would be) sin.
- 10 Yet I, Jehovah, am thy God,
From the land of Egypt,
Still I make thee dwell in tents,
As in the day of the Feast (of Tabernacles).
- 11 And I spoke to the prophets,
And multiplied visions,
And through the prophets gave similitudes.
- 12 Is not Gilead iniquity?
Surely they have become wickedness.
In Gilgal they sacrifice bulls,
Their sacrifices also are like heaps⁴
On the furrows of the field.
- 13 And Jacob fled to the fields of Aram,
And Israel served for a wife, and for a wife kept (sheep).
- 14 And Jehovah led Israel from Egypt by a prophet,
And by a prophet was it guarded.
- 15 Ephraim has provoked bitter anger;⁵
He [God] will⁶ leave his blood upon him,
And will return to him his disgrace.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — קְדוּשִׁים: is an intensive plural [plural of majesty], like אֱלֹהִים, and therefore coupled with a sing. adjective [comp. Ps. vii. 10].

[2 Ver. 5. — עִמּוֹ. Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, Syr. *et al.* render: with him, as if they had read עִמּוֹ. But there is no variety of reading in the MSS. For the propriety of the reading in the Text, comp. the Exegetical Remarks. — M.]

3 Ver. 9. — עָנָן is perhaps employed as a word-play upon the preceding אָנֹכִי.

4 Ver. 12. — בָּלִים, a word-play with בָּלָל.

5 Ver. 15. — תִּמְדּוּרִים is here used as an adverb. [Comp. Green, § 274, 2c.]

[6 Ver. 15. — יִשֹּׁב is the subject of יָשַׁב as well as of יָשִׁיב. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Ephraim has surrounded me with lying. Israel's conduct towards Jehovah was lying and deceit. He reckoned upon attachment and fidelity, and might well do so, as being their

rightful Lord. But instead of this they turn away from Him and to idols, and seek help in the heathen, and not in God. They surrounded Him: it was no isolated act; it was the general practice; He was treated so by all Israel. יָדָה. The meaning is uncertain. The word occurs only be

sides in Gen. xxvii. 40; Ps. lv. 3; Jer. ii. 31. Probably = rove about, vacillate, therefore: and Judah vacillates still with God = does not remain faithful to Him. Others see here rather a commendation of Judah, and take רדוּ = רדד, to tread down, subdue: prevails still with God. Löwe accordingly explains the last hemistich differently from the usual method. He joins נֶאֱמָר

also to נֶאֱמָר, and translates: faithful towards the Holy One. The connection of the clauses might justify such a view. But such a contrast between Judah and Ephraim, in which Judah is as strongly commended as Ephraim is accused of unfaithfulness, is hardly suitable here. Jehovah has a controversy with Judah (ver. 3), comp. iv. 1; not to speak of the character and course of conduct ascribed to Judah in x. 11; v. 5, 10, 12, 13, 14. Judah is indeed differently characterized from Israel, but the difference lies in the term: vacillate. It could not be said that the former was firm and faithful. The two words are therefore to be taken together = the faithful holy One. God is called holy in strong contrast to the conduct of Judah.

Ver. 2. רֵיחַ an image of nothingness, vanity, זָרִיחַ: east wind, a hot wind coming from the Arabian desert, which dries up everything in its course. [Comp. Job xxvii. 21. See the appendix to Delitzsch on Job. — M.] As in the case of רֵיחַ, the destructive, and not merely the unprofitable, is here the *tert. comp.* The second member thus probably contains an inference from the first = because Ephraim loves what is vain, it pursues — certainly without meaning it — that which entails destruction. Lying and violence, probably towards their neighbors, especially if we compare ver. 7, where they are admonished to preserve mercy and justice. Bear oil to Egypt, namely, as a gift, in order to win the alliance of Egypt; comp. 2 Kings xvii. 4. At one time help is sought in Egypt against Assyria, and at another in Assyria against Egypt.

Ver. 3. Jehovah has a contest = has sins to reprove; comp. iv. 1. This time the controversy is with Judah. In distinction from Judah, Jacob denotes, as in x. 11, the kingdom of the Ten Tribes, Israel. The name Jacob forms a transition to the allusion to the patriarch Jacob (vers. 4, 5).

Vers. 4, 5. In the womb, etc. Jacob was to be a type of his descendants by his struggling for the birth-right, and his wrestling with God in which he prevailed through prayer and supplication. That Jacob's conduct is not held up here to the people as a warning example of cunning and deceit, but as one of earnest striving after the birth-right and its blessings, is apparent from the wrestling with God mentioned in the second member of the verse (comp. Gen. xxxii. 23-29). The two members of the verse form a close parallel and at the same time a climax — 4 a: in the womb; 4 b: in manhood; 4 a: but seizes the heel, a secret, indeed, not an open struggle as was only possible in the womb, but 4 b: he wrestled, in the full sense; 4 a: with his brother; 4 b: with God. There is something also in the two names chosen, which also indicate a climax: Jacob from seizing the heel, and the more honored name Israel from wrestling with God. The struggle with God is more particularly described in ver. 5. God ap-

peared to him in the form of an angel. נִצָּן is taken from Gen. xxxii. 39. He wept and prayed to him. These words indicate the nature of the conflict, the weapons with which he conquered. At Bethel he found him. At the very place where idolatry and moral corruption prevail, Jacob found God. This shows the issue of the conflict, and alludes to Gen. xxxv. 9 ff., where God bestowed upon Jacob his name Israel and renewed the promise of blessing. And then He spoke with us, namely, with Jacob; what God then promised to Jacob applies to us, his children. The mention of the conflict with God and especially its issue, in ver. 5, show clearly that Jacob is not here referred to as a warning example of deceit, but that something typical is discovered in his action. See the Doctrinal remarks.

Ver. 6 then more specially marks the God who spoke, as Jehovah, God of Hosts, — scarcely without the design of placing Him, the only true God, in contrast to the gods now worshipped in Bethel. While God is specially designated Jehovah, in view of his revelation of Himself to Israel, He is called "God of Hosts" to show his supreme exaltation. And Israel could prefer idols to such a God as this! [The second member of the verse: Jehovah (is) his memorial, means that Jehovah is the name by which Israel was to remember Him. Comp. Ex. iii. 15; Ps. cxxxv. 13. — M.]

Ver. 7. For this reason Ephraim is exhorted to return to this God, an admonition further explained in the words which follow: observe mercy and justice, and wait upon God continually. Israel is now far from doing this.

Vers. 8, 9. This passage again begins with a description of the sinful conduct of Israel, which is made incisively by calling Israel Canaan, with an allusion also to the appellative signification of the word: merchant. They are like a dishonest merchant, who aims to become rich by deceit, from which results the oppression of the poor. This deceit is not to be taken out of its literal sense, as in ver. 1 (of idolatry as deceit practiced towards God), but is according to the context to be understood literally. The very opposite is practiced of that which is required in ver. 7, mercy and justice.

לֹא הֵרָוּ = means. לָבֵר = the results of labor. No injustice which would be sin = would entail punishment. In all his labor they would not be able to discover anything worthy of punishment.

Ver. 10. God reminds the deluded and presumptuous Ephraim (in order to bring home to it the folly and injustice of its insolent speeches), how He had been its benefactor since leaving Egypt, and had led it hitherto as a Father, as once He had done in the wilderness. "Not merely during the forty years wandering through the desert had the people enjoyed the wondrous protection of their God; even now — לֵוֹד — they still experienced his mercy. The expression 'dwelling in tents' accordingly alludes not merely to the privations and toils of the temporary wanderings in the wilderness, but also specially to the abundant blessings of God in the present (comp. 2 Kings xiii. 5)." מִזְבֵּחַ = the Feast of Tabernacles. As in the days of the feast = as the yearly dwelling in tents in a literal sense at the Feast calls to mind that protection afforded them in the desert. Others take the dwelling in tents to be a threat. But this does not suit the beginning of the verse

which is an allusion to a deed of divine mercy (comp. xiii. 4).

Ver. 11 continues to call to mind what God had done to Israel. עַל: "because the divine revelation, descending from heaven, reached to the prophets" (Keil). I spoke: probably a general reference, specified in the following clauses. — מִן: to compare, to use figurative language. [Henderson: "In such language, including metaphor, allegory, comparison, prosopopœia, apostrophe, hyperbole, etc., the prophets abound. They accommodated themselves to the capacity and understanding of their hearers by couching the high and important subjects of which they treated under the imagery of sensible objects, and invested them with a degree of life and energy which could only be resisted by an obstinate determination not to listen to religious instruction. — M.]

Ver. 12. The intermediate thought is probably: all was vain; Israel apostatized from his God. Therefore the punishment must come. "Gilead and Gilgal represented the two parts of the northern kingdom. Gilead the eastern, Gilgal the western." אֵין is difficult here. "When" is unsuitable. Hence it is probably to be taken as an interrogative particle: Is not Gilead, etc. Gilead is here called גִּלְגַּל, directly (vi. 8, a city of those who work iniquity); worthlessness, iniquity. אֵין

yea, surely = altogether. אֵין parallel with אֵין. The moral ruin has its counterpart in the physical — become a nothing, be annihilated. [It is better to take both words as relating to moral corruption: iniquity, evil. The expressions are virtually synonymous, and the combination is intensive. — M.] אֵין, accusative, not: to the bulls. This sacrifice was no sin in itself, but it was so as being done in Gilgal in honor of the idols. See iv. 15; ix. 15.

Vers. 13, 14. The great deeds of God for Israel are once more referred to, the ancient times being again recalled. There is again an allusion to Jacob, and as vers. 4, 5 referred to his actions, so here we have his misfortunes, his humiliation; how he had to take to flight, serve for a wife, and that by keeping sheep. We are then to supply: And yet I have guarded and blessed him. To this then would follow in ver. 14, a further example of God's care. But more probably ver. 14 is to be taken together with ver. 13, and then is seen in that servitude of the progenitor the beginning of the bondage of his immediate descendants in Egypt. The sense would then be: and how has God concerned Himself for Israel (in the name Israel the person of Jacob and the nation would be united), and defended them! Comp. Dent. xxvi. 5 ff., where the bondage in Egypt is connected immediately with Jacob and even with his flight to Mesopotamia. By a prophet: The greatness of God's deeds is still more clearly shown: God raised up and employed a prophet specially for this object. If vers. 13 and 14 are taken together, נִשְׁמָר perhaps alludes to שָׁמַר, ver. 14; from protecting he came to be protected. It is also possible that the second בְּרִיָּה forms a contrast to the second בְּרָא, one being a mark of humiliation, the other of exaltation.

Ver. 15. Instead of acknowledging what God

had done to the nation, and thanking Him therefor humbly (which according to Dent. xxvi. 5 ff., was to be done by the yearly offering of the first-fruits), Ephraim bitterly excited God's anger.

Therefore the Lord would punish them. יָצַד = his blood-guiltiness. אָשַׁם, to leave alone, opposite to taking away or forgiving. His disgrace, probably that which Israel casts upon God.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

The way in which Jacob is mentioned in this chapter is peculiar. In vers. 4, 5 mention is made of two events recorded in Genesis: that which, according to Gen. xxv. 26, he did in seizing his brother's heel in the womb, and that which, according to Gen. xxxii. 24, he did as a man. These two are placed in mutual relation: and the expressions which describe them are clearly parallel. Moreover they form a climax. They were analogous; but the second was an essential advance upon the first (as really as manhood is an advance upon pre-natal existence). Hence the first is only briefly indicated; forms only the starting-point. The stress is laid upon the second, upon which the discourse dwells longer (ver. 5). If it should excite surprise that just these two events should be made prominent and compared as they are here, it must be remembered that in Genesis the two names of the patriarch are said to have been connected with them, and in such a way as that the second is an advance upon the first. Accordingly we can briefly indicate the meaning of this reference to Jacob thus: He who was a Jacob (holder of the heel) even in his mother's womb, became afterwards in his manhood an Israel, a wrestler with God. The former was, so to speak, the beginning of the latter; the latter the completion of the former. The Prophet sees in the record of that seizing of the heel, something significant, namely, an allusion to the precedence which Jacob, although the second-born *κατὰ φύσιν*, should have, by the free elective favor of God, over the first-born who by nature had the preëminence; that he received the divine promises, and even that the action was regarded as an (unconscious) striving of the embryo itself after the possession of that which the divine favor had in store for it. Then what the embryo did unconsciously by struggling, as it were, for the possession of the divine promise, the man did consciously with higher powers by wrestling with God Himself. The Prophet evidently regards the possession of the divine promises as the end and object of the conflicts. Having striven after it in his mother's womb, he gained it from God as a man. Ver. 5 shows how the Prophet understood this struggle with God, or what he regarded as its essence: it was humble but persistent supplication, showing how nearly the matter lay to his heart. This wrestling in prayer had the desired result: he prevailed. The Prophet finds the proof of this in Gen. xxxv. 9 ff. For there in Bethel, Jacob not only had his name Israel confirmed, but the promise was given, which declared him to be the chosen of God: "He spoke with Him." But the Prophet says: "with us." This shows that Jacob, in vers. 4, 5, does not mean the individual, but that the Jacob who afterwards proved himself an Israel, becomes an ideal personality, i. e., a type of the true Israel, the true people of God. This picture of the true Jacob-Israel, struggling for the possea-

sion of God's gracious promises, and therefore of the divine blessing, is held up to the shame of the present degenerate Israel, who tread under foot God's election of grace, and defy his judgments. What a contrast does the victorious conflict with God present to the course of Israel seeking to Assyria and Egypt for help! Hence the warning of ver. 7: to return to God and to confide steadfastly in Him. Jacob is mentioned in ver. 13 in another way. It is not his conduct towards God that is there alluded to, but God's dealings with Him—in raising him from his humiliation. And yet not *him* really; for more clearly still than in vers. 4, 5, the person of Jacob and the people of Israel flow into one another, or rather the former is a type of the latter. What is said in ver. 13 of humiliation by flight and servitude, refers primarily to the person of Jacob, but it is to be understood as that by the person the people proceeding from him are thought of. So in ver. 14, the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their preservation in the desert, are marked as the exaltation following, by divine grace, that humiliation. Thus what is here said falls under the point of view elsewhere held by our Prophet of the love which God had shown to Israel in ancient times (comp. also ver. 10), with which Israel's present conduct is then sharply contrasted (comp. ver. 15). But it is mentioned, as something special, that this gracious deed of God was brought about by a prophet. This manifestly serves to make it appear greater. God ordained a prophet for the special task of helping Israel. In ver. 11, also, Prophecy appears as an element of God's gracious dealings with Israel. In vi. 5 prophets were distinguished as the preachers of repentance and judgment sent by God. In our chapter they appear more generally, as the organs of God's revelation to Israel, as the tokens that God stood constantly towards his people in a living relation (as already in Amos ii. 11). The sending of Moses falls under this point of view: in him as a Prophet God entered into a living and gracious relation with Israel and showed Himself to be their God.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. How sad it is that God must so complain of his people! and yet how often is it necessary! He is faithful and true, so well disposed, and we are so insincere towards Him! pretending to serve Him, and yet only serving Him with the lips while the heart is far from Him!

Vers. 4, 5. STARKE: God's blessing is to be obtained not by desert, but by weeping and entreaty. Tears and prayers are the true method of struggling with God.

PEAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Great victory and blessing are to be found in prayer; for prayer can ever overcome God. Only struggle on, my soul, and persist until thou dost reach to the very heart of God, and thou wilt certainly receive an answer from Him, if not always outwardly, yet always in the Spirit.

[FAUSSET: Tears were the indication of one whose words of prayer were no feigned words, but whose heart was deeply moved by the sense of his great needs, and whose feelings were excited by vehement and longing desires. Therefore at Bethel "he found God," because God first "found him," and moved him so to weep and supplicate. And

there God spake not only with him but "with us," whosoever of us follow the unconquerable faith of his tearful prayers.

PUSEY: There He spake with us, how, in our needs, we should seek and find Him. In loneliness, apart from distractions, in faith rising in proportion to our fears, in persevering prayer, in earnestness, God is sought and found. — M.]

Ver. 6. In the name Jehovah, Israel had the security that God was their God, and they his people. "Our Father" is the same for us; for God is our Father as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that Name is the security of our blessedness.

Ver. 7. How easy is conversion, when we are not converted to a strange God, but to our own God, who helps us towards Him! But it is just as certain that all who have departed from God need to return. Turn unto God! is the most natural, but also the most pressing cry. True conversion must be attested by its fruits. Men are converted truly to God, when they trust in Him constantly.

LANG: Faith, love, and hope must abide together.

[MATT. HENRY: Let our eyes be ever towards the Lord, and let us preserve a holy security and serenity of mind under the protection of the divine favor, looking without anxiety for a dubious event, and by faith keeping our spirits sedate and even; and that is waiting on God as our God, in covenant, and this we must do continually. — M.]

Ver. 8. The chief distinction of the Canaanitish character is the earthly mind, which leads of necessity to unrighteous deeds. Avarice is a root of all evil, and a mother of unrighteousness.

[FAUSSET: How much deceit is practiced by so-called Christians of the trading world, who are "Christians" only in name! — M.]

Ver. 9. STARKE: Those who infer the possession of divine favor from outward prosperity make a great mistake. Much deceit and injustice is done in trade and intercourse with men, and when God does not punish at once, every one supposes that he who practices them is not guilty.

[FAUSSET: None are more blind to their spiritual danger than those eager in pursuing gain. The conventional tricks of trade and the alleged difficulty of competing with others save by practicing the usual frauds, are made the excuses for usages, which, whatever else they gain, end in the eternal loss of the soul! In regard to spiritual riches the soul is never so poor as when satisfied with its own imaginary riches. — M.]

Ver. 10. STARKE: We should diligently call to mind and never forget the benefits which God bestowed upon our forefathers.

[PUSEY: The penitent sees in one glance how God has been his God from his birth until that hour, and how he had all along offended God: The Feast of Tabernacles typifies this our pilgrim state, the life of simple faith in God, for which God provides; poor in this world's goods, but rich in God. The Church militant dwells, as it were, in tabernacles; hereafter we hope to be received into everlasting habitations in the Church triumphant. — M.]

Ver. 13. A man may be chosen by God's grace, and an heir of God's promises, and yet may suffer distress and humiliation. In the fullest measure was this realized in the Son of God Himself. What else then can we expect?

II. *The Judgment of God's Anger.*

CHAPTER XIII.

- 1 When Ephraim spoke, there was trembling;¹
He exalted himself in Israel,
Then he transgressed through Baal and died.
- 2 And now they continue to sin,
They made for themselves idols of their silver,
Images according to their understanding [as they pleased]
All of them the work of artificers;
To them men who sacrifice² are speaking (in prayer),
They kiss the calves.
- 3 Therefore will they be like the morning cloud,
And like the dew, which soon passes away,
Like chaff which is whirled³ out of the threshing-floor,
And like smoke from a window.
- 4 And (yet) I am Jehovah, thy God,
From the land of Egypt,
And thou dost not know a God besides me,
And there is no Saviour except me.
- 5 I knew thee in the desert,
In the land of droughts.
- 6 According to their pasture [as they fed] they were **satisfied**,
They were satisfied, and their heart was uplifted,
Therefore they forgot me.
- 7 And (so) I became⁴ as a lion to them,
And as a leopard I lurked in the path.
- 8 I will attack them like a bear⁵ robbed of her whelps,
And rend the inclosure of their heart,
I will devour them then like a lioness;
The wild beast of the field shall rend them.
- 9 It has destroyed thee,⁶ Israel,
That thou (hast been) against me, against thy Help.
- 10 Where⁷ then is thy king,
And he (who) will help thee in all thy cities?
And thy judges⁸ of whom thou saidst:
"Give me a king and princes?"
- 11 I give thee a king in my anger,
And will take him away in my wrath.
- 12 Ephraim's guilt is bound up,
His sin is treasured away.
- 13 The pains of a travailing woman shall come upon him:
(But) he is an unwise son;
Because at the (right) time⁹ he would not enter the opening of the womb.
- 14 Should I redeem them from the hand of hell?
Should I free them from death?
Where are thy plagues, O death?
Where is thy destruction, O hell?
Repentance shall be hidden from my eyes.
- 15 For (though) among (his) brethren he may be fruitful,¹⁰
An east wind will come,
A breath of Jehovah rising from the desert,
And his spring shall dry up and his fountain be parched;
He [Assyria] shall plunder the treasure of all the costly vessels.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL.

1 Ver. 1. — **רָחֵם**, *āp. lēy.* = **רָחַץ** [Jer. xlix. 24. Targ. **רָחַץ**. — M.]

[2 Ver. 2. — **אֶדְכֵּי**. This construction is to be explained on the principle laid down by Ewald, § 287 g, that the subordinate word in the construct may sometimes denote the individual or individuals of the class denoted by the principal word. For an example of the same construction in addition to the one given in the exposition, see Micah v. 4,

אֶדְכֵּי, those of men that are anointed. — M.]

[3 Ver. 3. — **יִסְעֶר**. See Green, § 92 b. — M.]

[4 Ver. 7. — **יִסְעֶר**. **י** is inferential, Green, § 287, l. — M.]

[5 Ver. 8. — **יִסְעֶר** here means the female bear, and yet, being of the common gender, it may be joined with a part. masculine. Comp. cxliv. 14 for a parallel case. — M.]

[6 Ver. 9. — **שָׁחַדְתָּ**. We have here the third sing. Piel. There is no ground for assuming a substantive: destruction, as Henderson does. — M.]

7 Ver. 10. — **אֵי**. A particle of interrogation. It is dialectical, and occurs only here and in ver. 14. It is = **אֵי**: where, and is strengthened by **אֵי** = *tandem*, *πότε*: when then?

[8 Ver. 10. — Supply **אֵי** before **שָׁחַדְתָּ**.

[9 Ver. 13. — **עַתָּה** must be taken here adverbially: at the (right) time. — M.]

[10 Ver. 15. — **יִסְעֶר**. A *āp. lēy.* The form **יִסְעֶר** is supposed, with probable correctness, to have been chosen instead of the usual **יִסְעֶר**, in order to conform to **יִסְעֶר**, of which it is the root. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. When Ephraim spoke, etc. An allusion to the high respect paid to Israel. **יִסְעֶר** is here intransitive [comp. Ps. lxxxix. 10 : Nah. i. 5]. The reference is to the unrighteous desire for predominance cherished by Ephraim, which led at last to the schism from the House of David. But internal declension was immediately connected with this. The worship of Baal evidently began really with the calf-worship according to the view of the Prophet. He cannot allow it to be maintained that the latter was the worship of Jehovah. And died: They died spiritually, and then outward ruin comes also. [This view of the whole verse is approved by Henderson, Pusey, and most recent Expositors. — M.]

Ver. 2. All their former transgressions were continued. **לָהֶם הֵם אֶמְכֵּי**. This is difficult.

אֶמְכֵּי is not = who sacrifice men, for human sacrifices were not offered in the calf-worship, but = those among men who sacrifice, according to the analogy of **אֶמְכֵּי** (Is. xxix. 19). Keil renders: of them they say (those of the men that sacrifice); they kiss the calves. But this is linguistically harsh, for "they kiss calves" would be *oratio obliqua*, and **לָהֶם** would mean: of them, namely, of the images. It is besides unnatural. To whom should the offerers "say" that they kiss the calves? They certainly perform such actions, and it is that is the conduct here rebuked, but their saying that they do so is a very remote idea. We are therefore obliged to take **אֶמְכֵּי** here absolutely as it is nowhere else employed = speak in prayer. This is just the thought that is suitable here. It had been previously said that these images are purely the work of men themselves, and yet — how cutting is the reproach! — they speak with these very words of their hands, they kiss them, as though they were flesh and blood.

Ver. 3. The punishment of this is swift destruc-

tion. As to the figures of the morning cloud and the early dew, see on ch. vi. 4. Here there are added other comparisons; the usual one of chaff, and, besides, that of smoke, which escaped by the windows since there were no chimneys.

Vers. 4, 5. As contrasted with Israel's idolatry Jehovah points again to what he had done for Israel long ago, at first with the same words as those employed in xii. 10, but afterwards more fully. I knew thee, with the accessory notions of love and compassion.

Ver. 6. The goodness of God is abused. According to their pasture, *i. e.*, in the land given them by God. The complaint rests upon Deut. viii. 11 ff. (comp. also xxxi. 20; xxxii. 15 ff.). That against which they were there warned, has been done.

Vers. 7, 8 therefore describe the punishment, in accordance with the figure of the pasture, in which Israel is the flock. The flock will be rent as by wild beasts (comp. also, v. 14). **יִסְעֶר**, and I became to them: the punishment had already begun and would be continued. The inclosure of their heart = their breast.

Ver. 9. It has destroyed thee, O Israel, that thou wert against me, thy Help. The second clause gives the cause of the first. **אֵי** is then to be taken in the sense of "against"; that thou against me, against thy help. According to the sequel the special reference is to the falling away from the House of David. [So Ewald, Keil, and most of the recent Continental Expositors agree in adopting the above explanation. Pusey and Noyes among the Anglo-Americans also prefer it. The others generally hold to the rendering of the E. V. The two chief objections against the latter view are that it demands a very roundabout rendering of **אֵי**, and that the second **אֵי** is most naturally to be taken in the same sense as the first, and therefore cannot be a *Beth essentialis*. — M.]

Ver. 10. Israel had indeed a king, but not one who could help them, or defend their cities (against Assyria). And thy judges, probably = the princes who surround the king, "the ministers and coun-

sellors appointed by the king, who along with him exercise the highest judicial and executive authority." Give me a king and princes; not without allusion to the request of the people in the time of Samuel. On the case of Jeroboam, they repeated this ancient demand, at that time reproved by the Lord, in a still more sinful way.

Ver. 11. I give thee a king in my anger, not: I gave thee, because the expression is not to be limited to the elevation of Jeroboam, but refers generally to the kings of Israel. When they separated from the House of David and set up their own kings, God punished them, because in doing so "they forsook his worship, and gave themselves over to the power of their ungodly kings." And will take him away. This refers not merely to the dethronement of one king by another, but to the kingdom generally, which God would overthrow in his anger. The anger of God stands therefore at the beginning and at the end; giving kings and taking them away, are both an evidence of his displeasure.

Ver. 12 shows that the taking away of the king is inevitable: "*servata sunt ad vindictam omnia peccata eorum*" [Henderson: "The metaphors are here borrowed from the custom of tying up money in bags and depositing it in some secret place in order that it might be preserved. The certainty of punishment is the idea conveyed by them. Comp., for the former, Job xiv. 17; for the latter, Deut. xxxii. 34; Job xxi. 19." — M.]

Ver. 13 describes the punishment under the image of birth-pangs, in which, however, the pains of the mother are not so much thought of as the pressure which the child must suffer. And yet, though there is distress in child-birth, it does not tend to destruction, but to birth, to a new life. So also here. But death does follow if the child is not pressed out into the vagina in consequence of the labor, so as to come into the world alive: So is it with Israel. Under God's judgment they put off a return to Him, and will not be born again; that judgment must therefore be their destruction.

Ver. 14, according to the common view, introduces a promise without any preparation. Yet, though we cannot be surprised at the occurrence of sudden transition in our Prophet, a promise is evidently quite unsuitable. We would from the foregoing words rather expect a mention of the punishment reserved for their guilt, or a description of their pains. It would then be surprising if a promise were introduced; and the fact is that threatening is here unmistakably becoming stronger, until ch. xiv. 1. To be sure, if ver. 14 be regarded as a promise, ver. 15 must bear the same character, as they are connected by "for." But the change would be only the more violent, taking place in one and the same verse, and Keil only imports his notion into the passage, when he, for this reason, makes a distinction, and refers the beginning of the verse to those who walk in the footsteps of the faith, etc., of their progenitor, and the rest to Ephraim who had become changed into Canaan [a merchant]. But, besides, the second part of ver. 15 manifestly presupposes the beginning of the same verse, the image of the blasting wind presupposing that of the fruit-bearing, or the former is chosen with direct reference to the latter; the judgment is regarded as a devastation by scorching wind, because Israel is conceived of as a fruitful field. Under any other view members of a verse, which are connected in meaning, would be sundered. If therefore ver. 15 throughout is nothing but threatening, its beginning with "for" ar-

gues the same character for ver. 14. The beginning of ver. 14 is then to be explained as a question, though without the particle of interrogation. From the hand of hell should I deliver them? The second member contains an energetic negative response. Nay, even death and hell are summoned and charged to inflict and execute the judgment

upon them. וְהִנֵּה as in ver. 10 = where (see farther in the Doctrinal Section, No. 4).

נִחַם: either repentance or compassion. The former is most suitable: it is not to be supposed that I repent of this threatening, that I recall it.

Ver. 15. וְיִפְרֹחַ אֶפְרַיִם alludes, with a play upon the name Ephraim (אֶפְרַיִם and אֶפְרַיִם), to their fruitfulness, in order to represent the judgment as a scorching wind destroying that fertility. He will spoil. "He," i. e., the enemy presented under the image of the parching wind, Assyria. The treasure of all precious vessels, is to be sought especially in the chief city, Samaria, which is named immediately hereafter.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. Apostasy from Jehovah, which appears here also as Israel's chief sin, brought death upon them: they died (ver. 1). This conception sounds the depths of the subject. Outwardly regarded, they lived long, even after they gave themselves up to the worship of Baal (just like a fruitful tree, ver. 15), but in truth inwardly they were dead. For true life consists in union with Jehovah: idols can give no life. Israel owed its life to Jehovah alone (ver. 4). Therefore, ver. 9: "It has destroyed thee that thou hast been against me, thy help." What God had done for Israel from the beginning is here again (vers. 4, 5) made prominent, and the deliverance from Egypt with the leading through the Desert appear again as the fundamental act of mercy, for through them Israel became "living." Their present conduct towards God was a base and ungrateful ignoring of those deeds in the presumption of a prosperity which they owed to their God (ver. 6). A people who are inwardly dead cannot long outwardly survive. That God whom they had forgotten and from whom they had turned away, would and must at last show them that He had not forgotten them (ver. 12) by destroying them without sparing. This is indeed the only means of bringing them to life. For that and that alone is designed by God in their case; see ch. xiv. This must ever be kept in view if we are to understand the threatenings aright, which are reproduced here in a peculiarly intensified form: vers. 7, 8, vers. 12 to ch. xiv. 1. But how true and striking is such a description seen to be, when we remember that this divine judgment is executed by the invasion of a foreign conqueror! With what cau his attack be better compared than with the attack of devouring beasts, or, after another image, with a scorching wind that destroys everything in its course? How often has that been repeated in the history of the nations!

2. The whole (temporal) kingdom was a divine system of punishment and chastening. At the request of the people, He granted them a king, but with the expression of his displeasure at their desire because it proceeded from unbelief and vanity, and with the declaration that they would lose their freedom by its realization. But, at the same time, this kingdom of Israel might become a blessing if

it with its king would obey God. Nay, God, by establishing the throne of David in Zion, even connected the most precious promises with this kingdom, if the king were entirely one with God and should gather about him a nation obedient to God. But the people with their king followed more and more decidedly a course opposed to God by separating (in the kingdom of the Ten Tribes) from the house with which God had connected his promises, and so forsaking the king which God had given them, they must therefore be punished by having this self-erected kingdom taken away, and the punishment is all the greater that they shall never return to a state of freedom, but must lie under the much viler bondage of foreign rulers until they return to the king whom God had promised to raise up from the House of David.

3. The passage in ver. 14 is and remains difficult, and, although in the light of the context we cannot regard it as containing a promise, yet the view which regards it as such is in so far to be respected as the beginning of the verse especially, taken by itself, makes it appear natural. For this reason, probably, the LXX. translate in this sense, and the Apostle Paul, freely following them, cites these words (in connection with Is. xxv. 8; 1 Cor. xv. 55), in the sense of a challenge indeed, but in the same with the implication that death and hell should reveal their impotence, and therefore in the sense of a promise. But this will not compel us to explain the words otherwise than as the context requires, and we find this in accord with any but the simply mechanical theory of inspiration. But it is still to be kept in mind that in one passage the possibility of a redemption from death and hell is presupposed even if its accomplishment is refused by the threatening. But it corresponds with the character of the New Testament that it has changed the threatening into a promise. While the Old Testament summons death and the underworld to execute judgment upon their servants, the New Testament rather shows them conquered and powerless, so much so that they must even yield up the prey which they already have, and so far Paul had internal justification to convert the Old Testament threatening into a promise, or rather into a pæan of triumph, and thus in the Spirit chose the true course. For the view of ver. 14 as containing a promise, we may cite further the beautiful remarks of Rieger: "Outward ruin becomes to many a path upon which they rush suddenly down to death and hell, and with their hardened hearts they prefer to be lost beyond redemption in death and hell rather than turn to God with contrite hearts, and yield themselves up to trust in Him. Therefore God's promise comprehends the whole ruin, the whole abyss of destruction into which the sinner rushes, so as to subdue proud unbelief by the promised redemption from death and hell, and make men driven to extremity well disposed towards God. O, that all to whom sin has become their destruction would allow themselves to be rescued by this hand offered them at the brink of death and hell, especially as we can behold more fully in the New Testament the victory which God has given us through Christ Jesus, and thus more easily gain its consolation."

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

Ver. 1. GERLACH: Pride comes before a fall. See how the sins of pride and false worship lead

to spiritual and eternal death! With sin there came not only guilt but also the seeds of death, and so the heart and life-blood are consumed. On the other hand, with the new righteousness comes new life into dead souls.

[FAUSSET: Sin separates from God, the true life of the soul. Let all professors of religion ever remember this, that sin, habitual or unatoned for, and spiritual life cannot coexist in the same individual (Rom. viii. 6). — M.]

Ver. 4. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: Since God has showered down upon us so many blessings from our youth up, and since all that we have we owe to his goodness, it is vile ingratitude to rely, not upon Him, but upon human power, false worship, and the like. We have only one God and Redeemer. Besides Him we must know no other.

[MATTHEW HENRY: It is a happy ignorance not to know that which we are not to meddle with. Whatever we take for our God we expect to have for our Saviour, that is, to make us happy here and hereafter. As where we have protection we owe allegiance, so where we have salvation, and hope for it, we owe adoration." — M.]

Ver. 6. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: So is it with the ungodly. They misuse God's blessings and become secure, forgetting the gracious Giver, when they should rather erect an imperishable monument to Him in their souls. See thou, too, O my soul! whether thou art thankful to thy Saviour, whether thou dost bring home to thyself rightly and constantly the blessings which God has given thee, both temporal and spiritual, whether thou dost praise and live for the gracious Giver with mouth and heart and a holy walk.

[PUSEY: They who follow God for Himself, things of this sort are not called their pasture, but the Word of God is their pasture, according to Deut. viii. 3. In like way, let all think themselves blamed, who attend the altar of Christ not for the love of the sacraments [ordinances] which they celebrate, but only to live of the altar. — M.]

Ver. 9. It is the conduct of men towards God which determines their woe or weal. God alone is our true Help; therefore everything that resists Him must be lost; and there is no greater folly than to rise up against Him.

PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: God is guilty of no man's destruction, but only man himself.

Ver. 11. PFAFF. *Bibelwerk*: It is a great calamity to a country when the Lord gives it a prince in his anger that he may be the instrument of his vengeance.

[FAUSSET: God often punishes men by giving them their wish. — M.]

Ver. 12. God can and would remit our sins; but He can also retain them, and must do so as long as we remain impenitent; and as long as God retains them all hope of being freed from them is vain.

Ver. 14. So far can the love of God be changed into wrath that He, to whom it were easy to save, does not do so, but delivers over to death and destruction, nay, even, as it were, invokes the powers of destruction to execute his wrath, without his repenting or recalling his purpose. Even in this God has assuredly purposes of salvation. He punishes so severely only to open the eyes, when and since all other means have failed. [See the Exegetical and Doctrinal Remarks. — M.]

Ver. 15. When God withdraws his hand all prosperity disappears, and that often suddenly, before men are aware.

[MATTHEW HENRY: See the folly of those that lay up their treasures on earth, that lay it up in

pleasant vessels, vessels of desire, so the word is, on which they set their affections, and in which they place their comfort and satisfaction.

PUSEY: Such are ungodly greatness and prosperity. While they are fairest in show their life-fountains are drying up — M.]

III. *Exhortation to Return: Promise of Complete Redemption.*

CHAPTER XIV.

- 1 Samaria will suffer punishment,¹
Because she rebelled against her God;
They shall fall by the sword,
Their sucklings shall be dashed to pieces,
Their pregnant women² shall be cut open.
- 2 Return, O Israel, to Jehovah, thy God,
For thou hast fallen through thy transgression.
- 3 Take with you words
And return to the Lord and say unto Him:
"Forgive all (our) iniquity³ and receive (what is) good [acceptable],
And we shall render unto thee our lips (as) oxen [as our sacrifices]."
- 4 Assyria shall not help us,
We will not ride upon horses,
We will no more say: our God, to the work of our hands,
(O Thou) in whom the orphan finds pity:"
- 5 I will heal their backsliding;
I will love them readily,⁴
For my anger is turned away from them.
- 6 I will be as the dew to Israel:
He shall bloom as the lily,
And shall strike his roots like Lebanon!⁵
- 7 His shoots shall go forth,
And his glory shall be like the olive,
And his fragrance like Lebanon!
- 8 Those that dwell under his shade shall revive [produce] corn once more.
And shall bloom as the vine,
His renown (shall be) like the wine of Lebanon.
- 9 O Ephraim, what have I to do any longer with idols?
I answer and regard [watch over] him.
I am like a green cypress;
With me is thy fruit found.
- 10 Who is wise, that he may understand these things?
Discerning, that he may know them?
For the ways of the Lord are direct,
And the righteous walk in them;
But transgressors stumble thereon.

TEXTUAL AND GRAMMATICAL

1 Ver. 1. — **עֲנִי**. From the notion of suffering punishment is derived the signification: to be desolated, waste — **עֲנִי**. [The reverse would be the order if any connection between the verbs existed. But there is none whatever. The latter meaning in all likelihood arose from the similarity in form between the two words, the one form naturally suggesting the other. But it is not to be inferred from this that the words are cognate. The roots are not at all related, but belong to families essentially distinct. First, however, holds to the affinity. But see the forms in Arabic and Ethiopic related to **עֲנִי**, and compare the radically different notions which lie at the basis of their prevailing significations respectively. — M.]

• Ver. 1. — הָרָהּ = הָרָהּ. The masc. verb. with a fem. substantive is anomalous. According to Ewald it is to be explained from the fact that the fem. terminations of the plur. imperf. are but seldom employed. [The suggestion of Henderson is worthy of consideration, that the anomaly was occasioned by the form of הָרָהּ immediately preceding. — M.]

• Ver. 3. — בְּלִתְשָׁא עֵין. בְּל precedes for the sake of emphasis, and becomes an adverbial notion [= take away our iniquity altogether.]

• Ver. 3. — נִדְבָה is an adverbial accusative [spontaneously, voluntarily, readily].

• Ver. 6. — Newcome prefers to read לְבָנָה, as more consistent with the context. But this cannot be admitted though it was the one followed by the Targum. See the exposition for the propriety of the image. — M.]

EXEGETICAL AND CRITICAL.

Ver. 1. Samaria shall make expiation, etc. מִן־הַשָּׂשׁ, from שָׂשׁ, to make atonement, to suffer punishment. [Rendered in E. V.: shall be desolate, comp. the remarks in the Text. and Gram. Section. — M.] It is unnecessary to join this verse to ch. xiii., although it is naturally connected with it. The foregoing threatenings converge here first into the prophecy “concerning the destruction of Samaria because of its apostasy from its God,” and then upon this groundwork is based the exhortation to return, and the promise of renewed mercy conditioned upon repentance. [Henderson: “For the concluding portion of the verse, comp. 2 Kings viii. 12; xv. 16; Amos i. 13. That such cruelties were not unknown among other nations, see Iliad, vi. 58, and Horace, Carm. iv. Od. 6.” — M.]

Ver. 2. יְהוָה, עַד, even unto Jehovah [literally: until, as far as, unto Jehovah. — M.]

Ver. 3. Take with you words: They are not to come to Jehovah empty, but at the same time need take nothing more than words, no outward gifts. The words they are to use are now named, וְקַח טוֹב, and accept good, namely, what now follows: the sacrifices of the lips. [The true idea of the phrase seems to be: receive what is good, pleasing, acceptable. For this sense of טוֹב, comp. Num. xxiv. 1; Deut. vi. 18. I find the meaning of the passage admirably expressed by Ewald: “The people must first return to God’s love. The Prophet does not merely exhort them to this course; he shows them also in what manner it should be made; how and in what spirit the penitent are again to draw near to God’s favor; namely, not with outward, even though imposing sacrifices, with bulls, *e. g.*, but with words, with the lips, *i. e.*, with the living promises of the spirit that struggles after mercy and offers what is good.” The English expositors have, for the most part, followed the rendering of E. V.: and receive us graciously. Horsley (who is strangely opposed by Henderson “on the ground of philology”) and Pusey recognize and adopt the natural and true construction. — M.] Literally: and we will render as bullocks our lips, *i. e.*, we will offer to thee for our sins the confession of our guilt and the promise of our return instead of sacrificial oxen (comp. Ps. li. 17–19; lxix. 31 f.; cxvi. 17; cxli. 2).

Ver. 4 follows immediately with such a vow, no longer to rely upon Assyria, no longer upon warlike power (horses) generally, no longer to serve idols. וְאָשֶׁר בָּךְ, Thou, through whom, etc. Reliance upon God’s compassion is that upon which the whole prayer of penitence is based.

Ver. 5. The promise of mercy follows as an

answer to such a prayer of penitence. Heal their apostasy = the calamities which it has entailed.

נִדְבָה [spontaneously] expresses God’s perfect readiness to bestow such love.

Vers. 6 ff. The effects of this love of the Lord are rich blessings upon Israel: Jehovah Himself will become to Israel like a refreshing dew, and the consequences of this would be that they should bloom and strike root and send forth branches, or that they should flourish and develop a vigorous life. Like Lebanon, not simply like the cedars, but like the mountain itself, rooted as deeply and firmly. Like the olive [ver. 7] with its evergreen leaves and rich fruitage. His fragrance like Lebanon with its cedars and aromatic shrubs.

Ver. 8. Here from Israel as a whole, compared to a tree, are distinguished the members of the people, as those who flourish vigorously beneath the shadow of the tree. וְאֶשְׁבֵּר is to be joined

with יָחִיד in an adverbial sense = again. The latter word = live again, become fruitful. They themselves shall even become like a vine, producing wine as precious as that of Lebanon. O Ephraim! what have I still to do with idols? = I will have nothing more to do with idols, *i. e.*, “I have now no longer to plead with thee on account of idols, as during the whole course of this prophecy Jehovah’s claims to honor as against idols have formed the predominant theme. This is all done away upon the ground on which this promise rests, that Israel has returned to the Lord” (Schmiedel). I have answered and will regard him (Ephraim) = will concern myself, care for him. God lastly compares Himself to a green cypress. In Him the people are to find their fruit, *i. e.*, the fruit which shall nourish them. [The English expositors, generally, adopt the rendering of the E. V., chiefly because the words of the first line do not seem to them suitable as uttered by God. But if they are held to assert that God would not have anything more to do with idols, would not come any longer into competition with idols for the affections of the people and so be brought into connection with them, they are seen to be suitable, and just what would be expected at the close of this book. And it would be altogether unnatural to introduce Ephraim as uttering this single exclamation in the midst of an extended passage in which God is the speaker. Finally, it is a most arbitrary principle which would require the insertion of the supplied words, or of any other, in a sentence in which the sense would be complete without an ellipsis. Manger carries such an unwarranted license to an extreme when he supposes that the whole verse forms a sort of dialogue, thus: —

EPHRAIM: What have I more to do with idols?

GOD: I have answered him and will regard him

EPHRAIM: I am like a green cypress.

GOD: From me is thy fruit found.

Upon this it is obvious to remark, that if the verse is a dialogue, and it were necessary to indicate who the speaker is in his first utterance, it would be just as necessary to give a similar intimation at the beginning of his next response. — M.]

Ver. 10. Who is wise, etc. An epilogue to the whole Prophetic Book. **ΠΕΣ** refers to all that precedes, to the chidings and threatenings concerning sin and idolatry. For right are the ways of the Lord. This the crowning declaration, comp. Dent. xxxii. 4. The ways which God is said to follow are straight, *i. e.*, direct, leading to the object. The righteous walk upon them, and are thereby righteous. But transgressors stumble thereon, *i. e.*, they deviate from them, and are thereby transgressors, and at the same time the consequences of such deviation are recorded: they fall into ruin.

DOCTRINAL AND ETHICAL.

1. It is clearly manifest here that the severe judgments announced as impending upon the kingdom of Israel have not their object in themselves, but are only means to an end. The kingdom in its present form must assuredly be destroyed, for it is utterly corrupt. But this is not to be done because God has turned Himself away from his people or desired to do so, or because his love for them is extinguished, but only because it is the only means of making room for something new, for the regeneration of his people.

2. Repentance, a return to God who had been forsaken, is to be the fruit of these judgments (comp. ch. ii. 18, 19), because it was their only design to lead to repentance, to make its necessity clear to the hearts of the people, and to prepare them for it through the severity of the wrath of God which they experienced, through their condition as "orphans" (ver. 4). The essential element of such a return was the prayer for forgiveness of guilt, involving both confession of and sorrow for sin, and in connection therewith the vow of a change of life. Rieger: "When the sinner resolves to return unto the Lord, the Spirit of Grace makes his soul willing. I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord. O how good it is if only the sullen silence is broken and he begins to speak with God from a heart freed from deceit. The highest instance of the honor which he can give to God in sincerely returning to Him, is to reject all help in men which he had sought before, and all creaturely consolation, to sanctify God the Lord in his heart, and to seek mercy like a helpless orphan, as our Lord Jesus has shown us that we are all orphans, teaching us to seek our Father in Heaven, like orphans who have no father on earth."

3. It is significant how "words" are emphasized as an expression of such repentance, and as explained by the contrast to "sacrifices," literal offerings of animals, every external legal service. Such sacrifices are not needed; "words" are sufficient; these are the true sacrifices well pleasing to God; and yet they must be words that express a right state of mind within. (On the other hand it must be remembered that words are no guarantee of a freedom from outward lip-service.) It cannot be said with certainty from this brief remark, whether the Prophet contemplates the sacrifices as entirely done

away, as in the expected time of the coming redemption. The main object is to speak of the return to God, and it is clear that he regards this as a going forth of the heart, which does not need the intervention of any sacrifice, and therefore as a prayerful and penitent approach to Him without the medium of an offering. The idea is certainly at once suggested that if mercy can be found without sacrifices, there is no need of them afterwards in the state of grace.

4. Such a return presupposes the restoration of God's favor, which is manifested by the promise of a condition of rich blessing. On this promise a restoration into their own country is not indicated as a special element, although it is evidently assumed, as exile from their country is to be regarded as the punishment that was decreed, according to the threatenings of chaps. ix.-xi. The promise in our chapter presents, so to speak, the positive side, after the negative has been shown. Punishment shall not merely be taken away; blessing shall be restored to them, through which alone a return to their country is to be gained. From the fact, however, that here at the close of the Book such a return is not promised, it is to be inferred that in the picture of the future redemption which the Prophet sketches, such return is not of itself the most important element, *i. e.*, the Prophecy looks beyond it and towards something greater connected with it, a complete manifestation of God's favor to his people, which finds its expression in a state of rich and wondrous blessedness. This we designate the Messianic character of the prophetic promise. It is therefore clear that we are not to seek the fulfillment of this promise in premessianic time; apart from the consideration that it did not then appear. The Messiah Himself, according to the statement of the promise, did not accomplish it as consisting in the glorious bloom and vigor of the people; nor will He do so, simply because He has already brought a still higher disclosure of God's mercy, and will yet introduce a more glorious display, in which the whole believing people of God will enjoy (outward and inward) blessedness, as the nation of Israel will no longer be the object of special favor.

5. The promise here made to the people of Israel, that of full bloom and prosperity, and vigor, through the influence of God's grace — still chiefly in a temporal sense, — shall be fulfilled for all believers as God's true people in a higher sense: they shall be perpetually bedewed with power from God. The favor of God is ever fresh and blooming for them, and they enjoy its fruits without intermission, as they themselves become like a living, firmly-rooted, wide-spreading, never-fading, sweet-smelling tree. All this has its beginning even now, as surely as the divine favor brought to us through Christ is a reality, but shall only find its complete perfection when the kingdom of God shall have attained its complete realization.

6. "It is the object of the Prophet Hosea and of all Prophecy, in the spirit of ver. 10, to alarm and to warn the apostate, to confirm and to comfort the converted, and to glorify the Lord" (Schmieder). Only the ways of the Lord are right. Then inevitable destruction must befall him who departs from them. True wisdom is to regard them, and all the prophetic Scriptures are like an uplifted finger, which warns against any departure from them, and at the same time like an outstretched finger which points to the way upon which the righteous must walk.

HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL.

VERS. 2-9. FRANK: He who would read what is sweet and agreeable, should read the close of all the Prophets. They are like a choir of singers, one singing one part, another another; but at last they all dwell upon one note. The glory of Christ's Church at last is the *finale*.

VER. 2. This is the key-note of all Prophecy; it always comes back to this. This warning is the most needed and the weightiest of all. All God's judgments have this as their aim. They cry out earnestly: Return. O that we might hear! It is well to hear when God calls through his deeds; but it is better to hear his Words. "To thy God," not to a strange God, but to One from whom so much good has been experienced, and who remains, the God of mercy and our God, even when He must punish us. Return! (1) the object: to the Lord, thy God; (2) the reason: because thou hast fallen through thy iniquity.

[MATT. HENRY: Sin is a fall, and it concerns those who have fallen by sin to get up again by repentance.

FAUSSET: God assures us that He is the God of his people, and invites us not merely to return *towards*, but never to rest until we have reached *even up to* Himself — to be satisfied with nothing short of Himself. — M.]

VER. 3. Words are nothing unless they come from the depths of the heart. But when they come from thence, as did the Publican's prayer, and David's psalm of confession, then, though seemingly slight and less than "sacrifices," they are in truth as great and naturally more than all merely outward offerings, since they are measured according to the disposition of the heart. All grief over sin avails nothing without the prayer for forgiveness addressed to God. Not repentance but forgiveness, gives rest and peace.

[PUSEY: What other good can we offer than detestation of our past sins with burning desire of holiness?

FAUSSET: What so cheap as words? And yet words such as God requires are not natural to fallen man. The Spirit of God alone can teach such words. In Gospel times we have no longer burdensome literal sacrifices to offer, but we have an offering continually to render which is more acceptable to Him (Ps. lxxix. 30, 31), the thanksgivings of unfeigned "lips," sanctified through the offering of Christ once for all. — M.]

VER. 4. God is gracious to orphans. O that all orphaned ones might turn to God's mercy!

[PUSEY: He is indeed fatherless who hath not God for his Father.

VER. 5. PUSEY: Steadfastness to the end is the special gift of the Gospel. In healing that disease of unsteadfastness God heals all besides. — M.]

VER. 6. STARKE: God alone can truly revive the heart. Let him who needs comfort and refreshing seek them in God.

PFÄFF. *Bibelwerk*: See how believers bloom in their holiness, strike root, bring forth fruit, and

diffuse fragrance all around! Art thou also such a fruitful tree displaying such vigor of spiritual life?

[FAUSSET: All that is beautiful, solid, harmonious, and enduring shall be found in harmonious union in the "trees of righteousness," etc. (Is. lxi. 3).

PUSEY: Such reunion of qualities, being beyond nature, suggests the more, that that wherein they are all combined, the future Israel, the Church, shall flourish with graces that are beyond nature, in their manifoldness, completeness, unfadingness. — M.]

VER. 9. O that God could speak thus of us, finding in us no idolatry, nor needing to plead with us any longer because of our idols! What better thing could we wish than that God would regard us in mercy? In Christ this is realized. In Him he is also as an evergreen tree of life to believers; his mercy never ceases, and from its fullness they may all receive grace for grace. He is for them an evergreen tree of life, but also one whose fruit never fails, and ever nourishes.

[MATT. HENRY: God will be to all true converts both a delight and a defense; under his protection and influence they shall both dwell in safety and dwell at ease. He will be either a sun and a shield, or a shade and a shield, as their case requires.

PUSEY: Created beauty must at best be but a faint image of the beauty of the soul in grace; for this is from the indwelling of God the Holy Ghost. — M.]

VER. 10. God's ways are direct; we must therefore not follow roundabout or crooked courses, but go straight forward in faith and labor; a straight course makes the best runner. Righteousness brings a blessing; unfaithfulness a curse, remains the simple and infallible rule of living, attested by God's word, and confirmed by experience.

LUTHER: Let us thank the merciful Father of Jesus Christ, for these greatest gifts, that He has revealed to us these direct ways, and pray that He would guide by his Holy Spirit those that walk therein, and preserve us to eternity.

[MATT. HENRY: God's discovery of Himself, both in the judgments of his mouth, and the judgments of his hand, is to us according as we are affected by it. The same sun softens wax and hardens clay. But of all transgressors, those certainly have the most dangerous fatal falls that fall in the way of God, that split on the Rock of Ages, that suck poison out of the balm in Gilead. Let sinners in Zion be afraid of this.

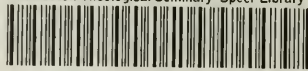
PUSEY: God reveals his ways to us not that we may know them only, but that we may do them. The life of grace is a life of progress. Every attribute or gift or revelation of God, which is full of comfort to the believer, becomes in turn an occasion of stumbling to the rebellious. With this the Prophet sums up all the teaching of the seventy years of his ministry. This is to us the end of all; this is thy choice, O Christian soul, to walk in God's ways, or to stumble at them. — M.]

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